

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

R.C.CAVE

B V

255

.C3

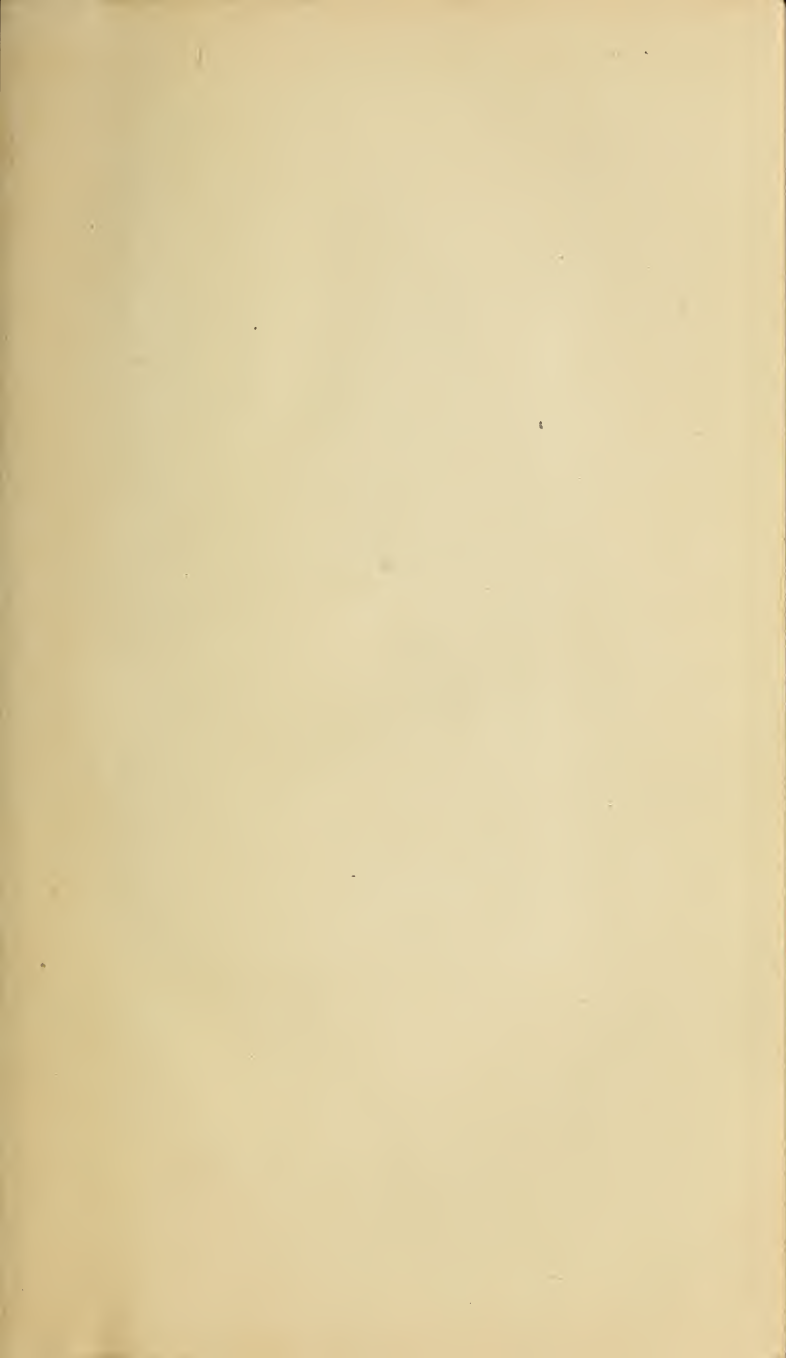


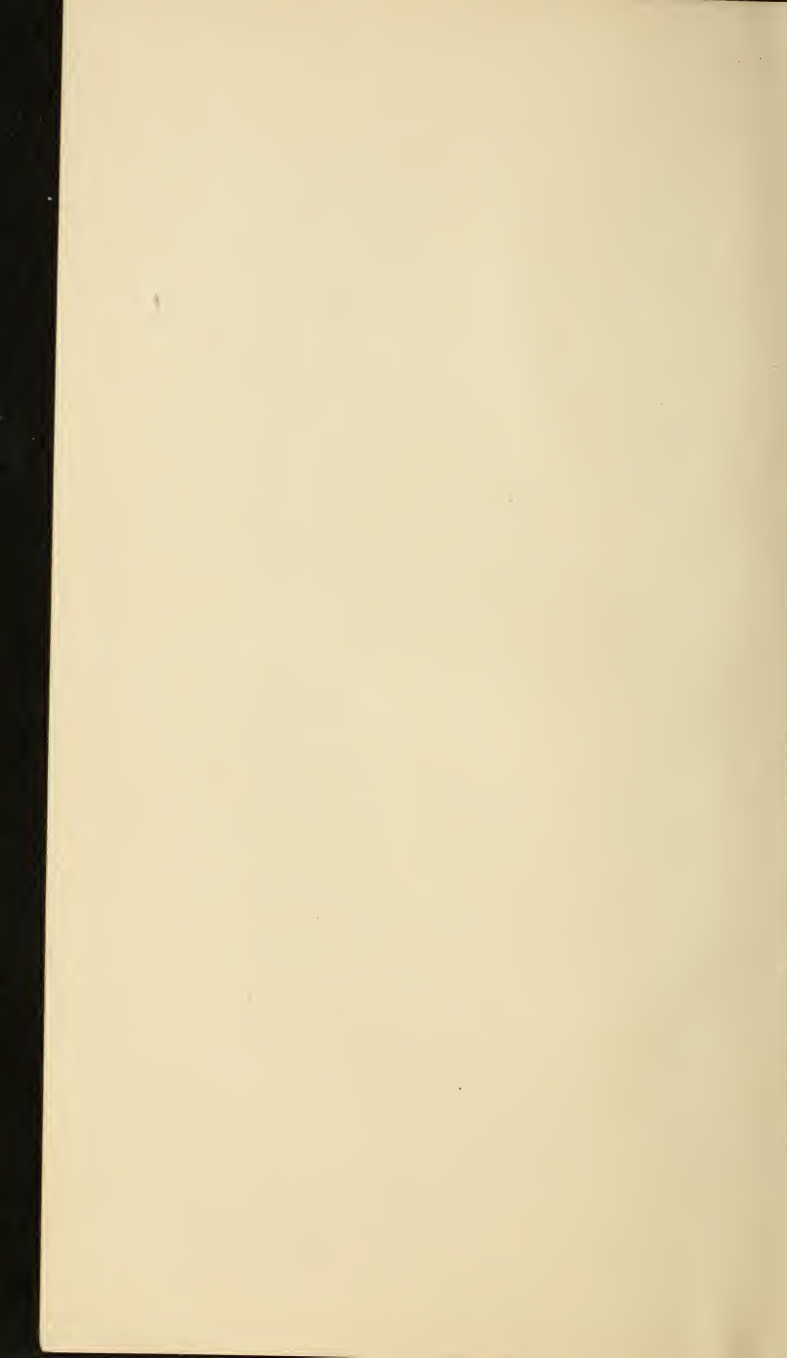
Class BV255

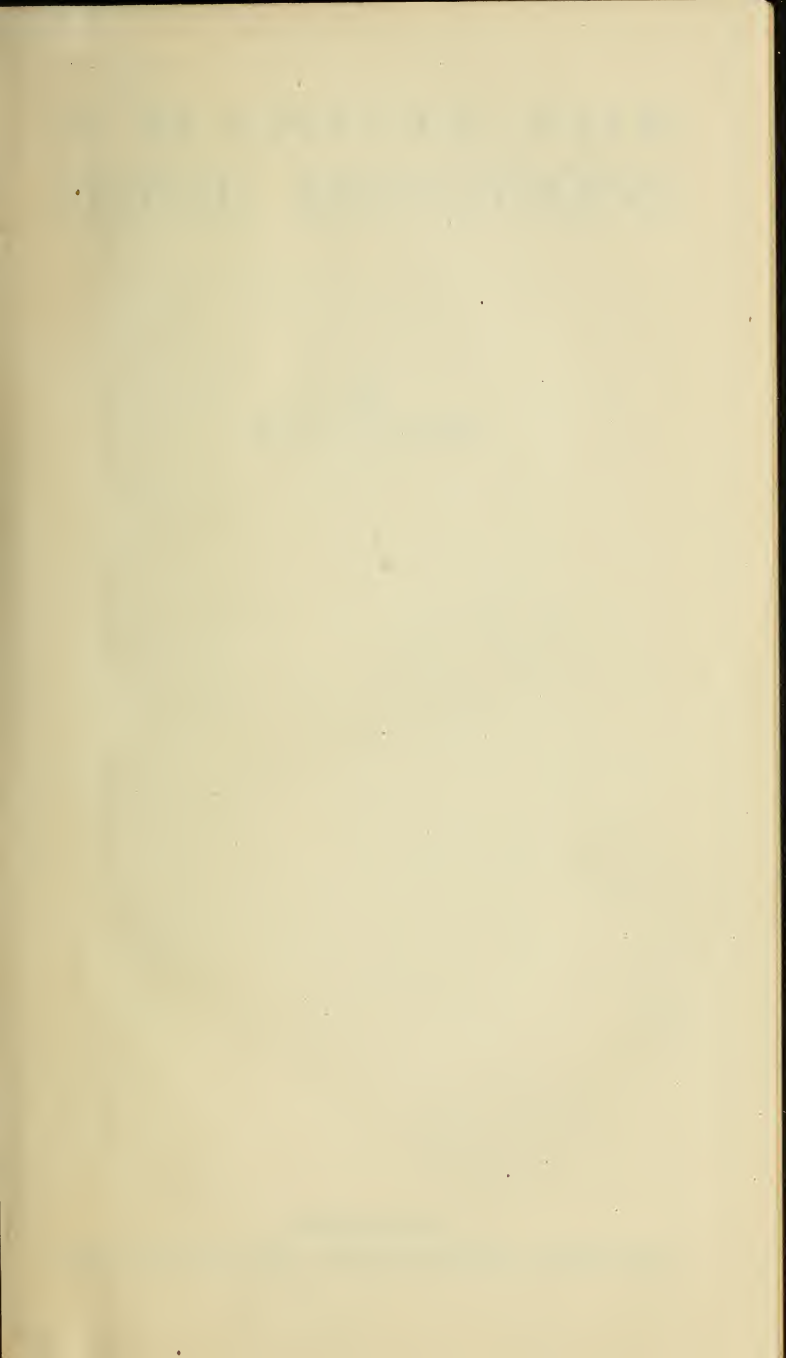
Book .C3

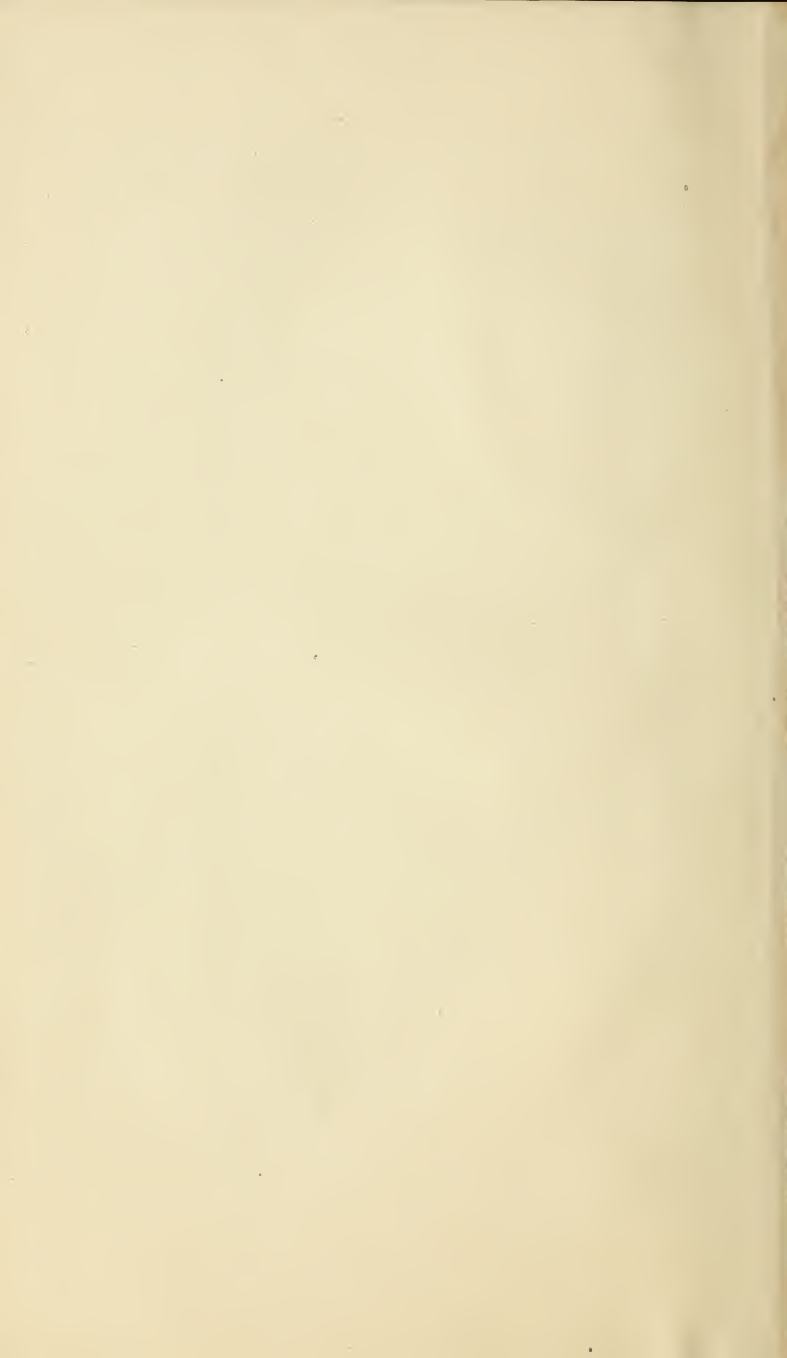
Copyright N^o _____

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.









A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

BY
R. C. CAVE

CINCINNATI
THE STANDARD PUBLISHING COMPANY

Copyright, 1919
The Standard Publishing Company

BV 255
C3

©CL A515048
MAR 28 1919

no 1

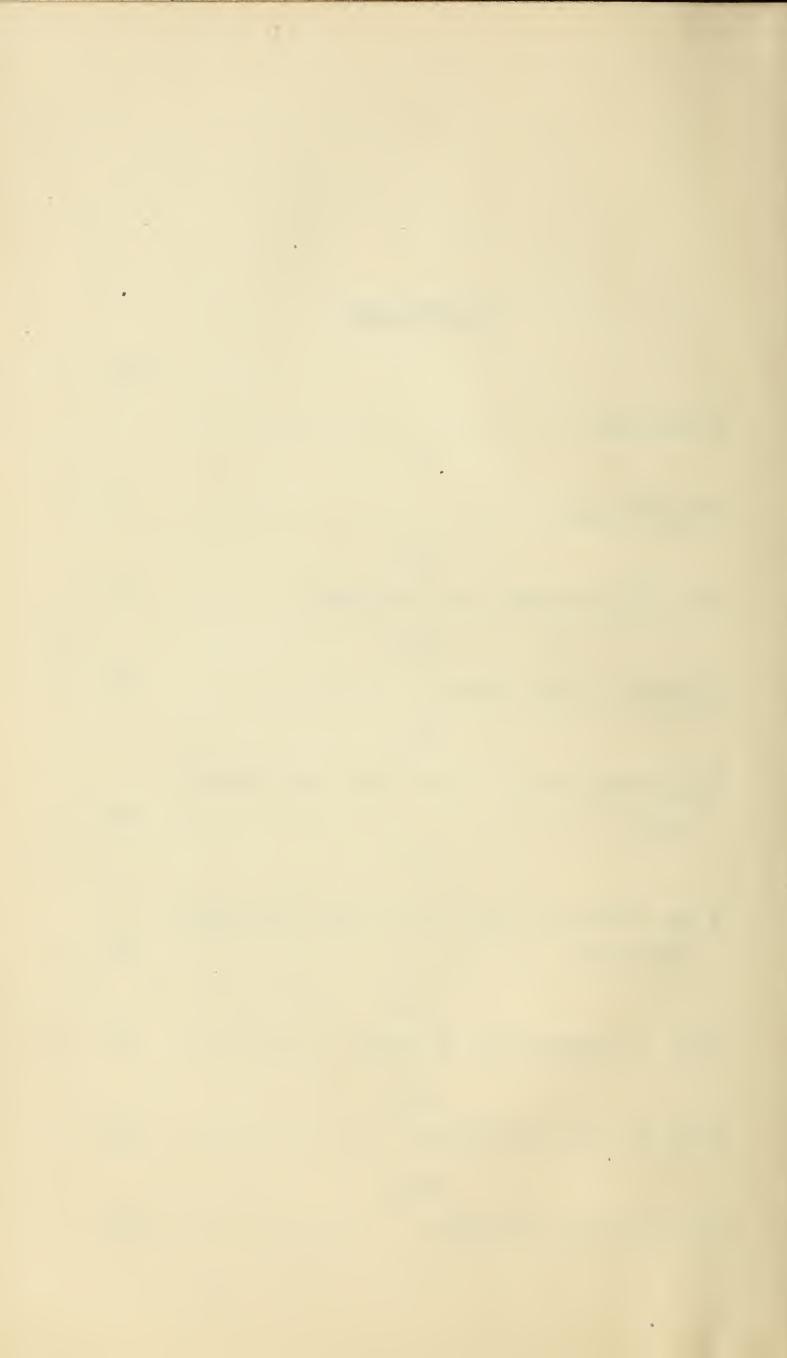
6.7.19
Mar. 29. 19.
“It is in the home that we must rear up
those tender plants which are one day to
be a hedge to keep the world of wicked-
ness out of the garden of our civilization.”

—Parker.



CONTENTS

	PAGE
FOREWORD	7
I	
THE FAMILY	9
II	
THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN.....	17
III	
KEEPING THE HEART.....	26
IV	
THOUGHTS FOR "THE DAY OF AFFLIC- TION"	34
V	
THE CHILD'S CRY AND THE FATHER'S ANSWER	58
VI	
THE CHRISTIAN'S WANTS.....	61
VII	
THE FAMILY WORSHIP.....	65
VIII	
THE GOLDEN THREAD.....	111

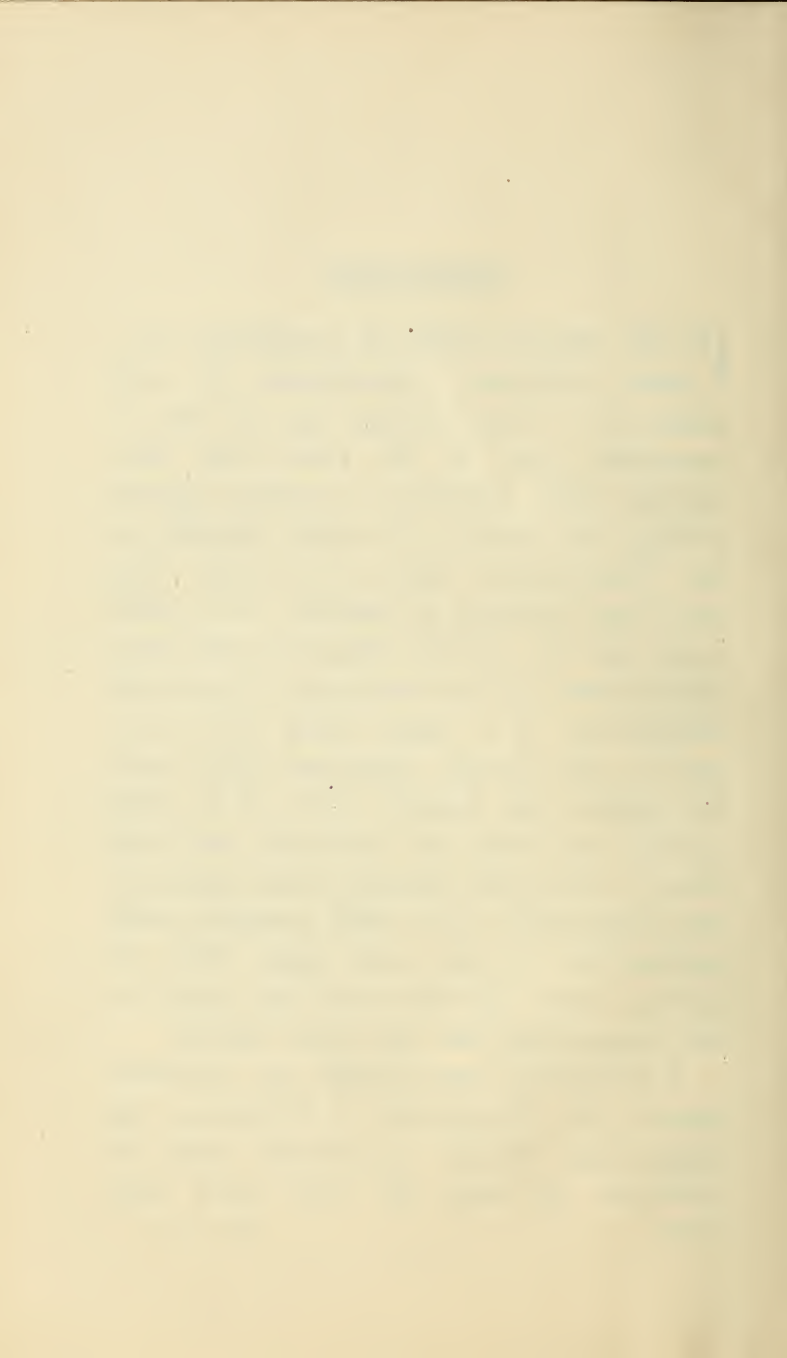


FOREWORD

IF this Manual shall be productive of a more religious atmosphere in any home; if it shall induce any to rear a household altar to the Lord, and offer thereon daily sacrifices of praise, thanksgiving, and prayer; if it shall rekindle on any hearthstone fires of devotion that have been allowed to smolder; if it shall incite any to greater diligence and more faithfulness in the discharge of parental obligations; if it shall bring into existence in any family influences that make for better and happier life; if it shall comfort any who are burdened, and help them to bear their burdens more patiently and cheerfully; if it shall awaken godly aspirations in any, and impel them to become more Christly—the time spent in its preparation has not been wasted.

I gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr. Frederick D. Kershner for suggestions which contributed much to whatever of merit the little book may have.

R. C. C.



I

THE FAMILY

THE family is one of the most inestimable of the many blessings bestowed upon mankind by the wise and benevolent Creator. The Bible story tells us that it was instituted in the garden of Eden when the Lord God, seeing that it was not good for the man to be alone, made and brought unto him a woman, as "an help meet for him," to banish his loneliness, satisfy the natural craving of his heart for companionship, and bring about the state of mutual love, sympathy, encouragement, and help which is necessary to the attainment of the best and happiest life.

Thus instituted, the family has been through all the centuries a most important factor in the life of mankind, making for the civilization of society and the betterment of human conditions. History tells of many noble and heroic

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

workers for truth and progress whose characters and ideals were formed by the family life of their childhood. The influences brought to bear upon them, and the instruction imparted to them, in the family circle were prophecies of the good work done by many of the world's benefactors; just as the unfeigned faith of the grandmother and the mother of Timothy was a prophecy that he would be a man of fidelity—"Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness," and "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

The family was graciously designed to provide for the gratification and happiness of parents, by satisfying their social instincts and exercising their generous impulses in loving service; and to be a training-school for children, imbuing their minds with good principles and directing their thoughts, affections, and aims to the things that are true and honest and just and virtuous and lovely. And although it has often been, and in many cases still is, so perverted that its gracious design is defeated and it is made conducive to evil rather than good,

THE FAMILY

it is still the state in which the storied happiness of Eden may be most nearly realized, and the characters of those who are growing up to play their parts in the world may be most effectually molded.

Nowhere else on earth can one find such unalloyed and enduring happiness as is found in the family where love rules and, under its rule, "the sweet charities of home" abound. One who seeks satisfaction in the whirl of worldly pleasures soon finds that such

"Pleasures are like poppies spread;
You grasp the flower, its bloom is shed."

One who fancies that earthly riches can bring contentment, and successfully labors to accumulate wealth, soon learns that there is heart-hunger which gold can not appease and soul-longing which all the wealth of the world can not satisfy. One who strives for earthly honors and power as means of securing happiness, even though he may climb to the pinnacle of fame and grasp a royal scepter, finds that "uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." All the pleasures, riches, and honors which the outside world can offer

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

fail to satisfy the yearnings of the human heart. It is only in the divinely ordained and sacred society of the family that the highest good, purest joy, and most abiding peace attainable on earth can be found. It is there that "blessings are increased by mutual participation, and the sting is plucked from the keenest sorrow by the touch of mutual affection."

"The world hath its delights,
And its delusions, too;
But home to calmer bliss invites,
More tranquil and more true.

"The pilgrim's step in vain
Seeks Eden's sacred ground;
But in home's holy joys again
An Eden may be found.

"A glance of heaven to see,
To none on earth is given;
And yet a happy family
Is but an earlier heaven."

The society of the family not only makes possible the attainment of the most pure and enduring earthly happiness, but it also supplies the relations and conditions requisite to the most efficient moral training.

Both man and woman are ennobled by a loving union in which they share the

THE FAMILY

duties, joys, and sorrows of life. The interests, aims, successes and failures, joys and sorrows which they have in common tend to draw them closer together, quicken and broaden their sympathies, make them more considerate and kindlier, and in many ways "consume the dross and refine the gold" of their characters. As children are born unto them, new relations arise, imposing obligations in the faithful discharge of which all the virtues that enter into and constitute moral excellence are exercised and strengthened.

The home life is especially influential in forming the characters of children. What is seen and heard and felt by them in the home makes such lasting impressions upon their young and receptive minds that it can be said with truth: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." The mind of the child is a clean page on which the associations, examples, and instructions of the home write tendencies and memories that later experiences can not obliterate, and that remain throughout life as character-molding influences. It is generally true

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

that children become what the training of their home life makes them.

But in order that the society of the family may bring the purest earthly happiness and produce the truest manhood and womanhood, its life must be wisely guarded and governed. It must be sustained, encouraged, and brightened by a cheerful confidence in the loving care and guidance of God, and dominated, sanctified, and ennobled by religion. "A house without a roof," says Dr. Bushnell, "would scarcely be a more indifferent home than a family unsheltered by God's friendship, and the sense of being always rested in his providential care and guidance."

But the God to whom the family looks for shelter, care, and guidance should be the infinite Father revealed by Jesus, whose rain falls on the unjust as well as the just and whose love follows his children through evil as well as through good, rather than the stern, wrathful, and revengeful Deity enthroned by some, whose pitiless anger is kindled against the erring, and who, instead of alluring the heart to trustingly turn to him as a

THE FAMILY

little child turns to a loving mother, fills it with dread, and impels it to hide from him behind some shelter, as "Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden."

The religion of the family should not be the harsh and gloomy asceticism which, vainly imagining that saintliness and divine favor may be obtained by means of self-imposed hardships and needless self-denials, is the enemy of all earthly joys, but should give encouragement to harmless amusements and pure pleasures, and make life bright and cheerful. It should be the religion which is "no sullen Stoicism and no sour Pharisaism, which does not consist in melancholy passions and dejected looks or depressions of mind, but consists in freedom, love, peace, life, and power." The family should be ruled by the religion which dispels gloom and makes the home merry—the religion which so harmonizes happiness and duty that the one is found in doing the other—the religion which may be summed up in the saying: "Love, and be happy;" for love and hap-

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

piness belong together, and "love is the fulfilling of the law." The religion of the family should permit and promote every pleasure that may be enjoyed without violating the law of love. Confidently relying upon the guidance and providence of the Father who is wisely and mercifully directing all things and "beyond whose love and care no blinded child can stray," and governed by the divine love which is "the fulfilling of the law," the family will be free from peace-destroying anxieties, jarring discords, and petty contentions, and, with all its members harmoniously and joyfully "walking the round of duty" day by day, will fulfill its divinely appointed mission to be the promoter of happiness and the nursery of virtue.

II

THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

THAT the education received in childhood exerts a lasting influence, and to a very large extent determines the character of manhood and womanhood, is universally conceded. "Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined," "The child is father to the man," and other like sayings, are proverbial. But while parents generally recognize the importance and duty of educating their children, many seem to have a very imperfect conception of what education includes. They seem to think that their whole duty in the matter consists in imparting to their children useful information and teaching them good behavior. And yet this is the least important part of education. "Instruction and breeding," it has been well said, "are to education as parts to a whole: the instruction respects the communication of knowledge, and breeding respects

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

the manners or outward conduct; but education comprehends not only both these, but the formation of the mind, the regulation of the heart, and the establishment of the principles. Good instruction makes one wiser; good breeding makes one more polished and agreeable; good education makes one really good." One may have all the knowledge that can be imparted to him and all the breeding that is needed to fit him for the most cultivated and refined society, and yet lack the enlarged and rightly directed mind and the wisely regulated heart necessary to safeguard him amid the temptations of life, prepare him to fulfill his mission of duty, and enable him to gain true honor and success. To safeguard their children and prepare them to obtain the greatest good, parents must add to instruction and breeding wise and assiduous moral training.

Parents should realize the fact that every child intrusted to their care is an immortal being—a deathless soul—the shaping of whose life for good or ill, for honor or shame, for blessedness or wretchedness, is largely in their hands; that they are under the most solemn obli-

THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

gation to promote the little one's spiritual growth; and that they must account for the manner in which they fulfill the obligation. It behooves them to diligently and prayerfully "watch and labor towards the development of the angel" within the child.

And how can this angel be developed? How can the child be rightly educated and fitted for high things and heavenly fellowship? It has been said that "all false methods of education are founded upon wrong ideas of the soul, the thing to be educated." Sometimes the soul is represented as an empty vessel needing to be filled; sometimes, as fallow ground needing to be cultivated; sometimes as a rough stone needing to be polished. While there may be a sense in which each of these figures is admissible, no one of them conveys a true conception of the soul's nature. The material figure which most nearly meets the demands of the case is that suggested by the Bible writer who speaks of it as planted, and thus indirectly likens it to a seed, or rootlet, which contains potentially within itself all that it will ever be, and requires

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

proper soil and surroundings to make it germinate and foster its growth. The soul is not to be filled, as an empty vessel, by pouring something into it; but, like the seed or rootlet, it is to be filled with nourishment that it draws by natural processes from its surroundings. It is to be cultivated as the plant is cultivated. It is to be shaped and polished as naturally as a flower is shaped and made beautiful. Its life must be developed by the natural unfolding of its own potentialities. As the oak is in the acorn and is developed therefrom through the influences of soil and climate, so all that the soul is to become is wrapped up in it, and will be developed from it by natural growth through the influences of the moral soil in which it is planted and the moral climate in which it is kept.

Training, then, should be wisely adapted to the soul's natural endowments and potentialities. It can confer no gift which nature has not bestowed. "Education," as some one has said, "can not create in men what God did not create in them when he started them in life." Education can draw out, improve, and

THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

make more effective the powers that as yet are latent in the child's soul, but it can give the child no new power. If one is not born with a talent for music, or art, or eloquence, or any other particular line of work, no training can give it to him. Hence, parents should not try to change the natures of their children and make them what they are not naturally fitted to be; but should study their natural tendencies and aptitudes, and sedulously, patiently, and lovingly endeavor to develop, expand, and strengthen the powers that are dormant within them. And the wise parent, discerning both the good and the bad in the child, will not try to eliminate the bad with denunciations and scourgings, but will rather encourage and nourish the good so that it will grow and drive out the bad as light dispels darkness.

All means used to further the moral and spiritual growth of the child—all discipline—should be characterized by kindness, gentleness, tenderness, and love. There should be no severe and seemingly cruel infliction of punishment. The old saying, "Spare the rod and spoil the

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

child," may be true enough where the rod is needed and lovingly and sorrowfully administered; but an indiscriminate and angry use of the rod tends to the moral ruin of the child. One may well marvel that so many children remain unspoiled despite the blows laid on them by angry and vindictive parents.

If it be said, as men often say, that severe punishment is sometimes necessary to break the child's will, it may be answered, in the words of a great and good man: "The will needs regulation, not destroying. I should as soon think of breaking the legs of a horse in training him, as a child's will. I would discipline and develop it into harmonious proportions. I never yet heard of a will in itself too strong, more than of an arm too mighty, or a mind too comprehensive in its grasp, too powerful in its hold. The instruction of children should be such as to animate, inspire, and train, but not to hew, cut, and carve; for I would always treat a child as a live tree, which was to be helped to grow, never as dry, dead timber, to be carved into this or that shape, and to have certain

THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

moldings grooved upon it. A live tree, and not dead timber, is every little child."

Probably the most potent influence affecting the moral education and spiritual growth of the child is the example of the parents. Day after day, throughout the period of childhood, the young mind is impressed far more by the deportment than by the precepts of the father and mother. From what they do, rather than from what they say, the child's notions of God, of religion, of right and wrong, and of duty are derived. If they manifest God in their daily lives as infinitely loving and lovable, the heart of the child will naturally be drawn out to him in answering love; but if their lives go to show that the God whom they worship is hard, unloving, and unlovable, the young heart will just as naturally shrink from him. If they do justly, show mercy, and walk humbly with God, they thereby incite the child to live the life that the Lord requireth; but if they are unjust, unmerciful, and ungodly, they thereby place before the child powerful incentives to ungodliness. If they show by their conduct

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

that their affections are set on things above, and that they are seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, their example will strongly influence the child to regard spiritual riches as the highest and best; but if their lives show that they are most eager in the pursuit of worldly wealth and honor and pleasure, their example will go far towards making their child a worldling. So, in all ways, the example of the parents powerfully influences the child for good or ill. Surely, then, parents ought to be most exemplary in their lives. They should tread warily, for they are making a path for the young and inexperienced soul who is looking to them for guidance. They should walk with circumspection in the way of wisdom, remembering that any departure from that way by them may wreck the child that follows in their wake.

While attracting their children to the good by daily exemplifying it, parents should, as far as possible, give them wise instruction, innocent amusement, congenial society, pure associations, benevolent activity, and whatever tends to foster things holy and divine—whatever is to the soul

THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

what the fertile soil and gentle rain and the quickening sunshine are to the flower. When this is done, the parental heart need feel no anxiety about the result. The spiritual growth of the child will follow naturally. As Professor Drummond says: "The soul grows as the lily grows, without trying, without fretting, without ever thinking about it." Living amidst pure and holy surroundings and favorably conditioned, the child will become "like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season."

III

KEEPING THE HEART

THE wise writer of the Proverbs said: “Keep thy heart with all diligence,” or, as the marginal reading hath it, “above all keeping.” He taught that man’s chief concern in life—the object of his most earnest and most constant endeavor—should be to keep his heart.

The keeping of the heart is declared to be thus important because “out of it are the issues of life.” It is to the life as the fountain to the stream, sending it forth and giving it quality. It is the home of the feelings that impel man to action, and it determines the moral character of the actions to which it impels, in so far as they are related to him who performs them.

If the heart be evil, the life flowing out from it is evil also. That life may be very beautiful in appearance; it may clothe itself with the forms of religion

KEEPING THE HEART

and adorn itself with good works; but all its show of goodness is a deception. It may "speak with the tongues of men and of angels," but it is only "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." It may be fair on the outside, but within it is full of uncleanness. The desires and affections which prompt its actions are impure, and this impurity clings to and poisons its noblest deeds. As the almsgiving and fasting and praying of the hypocrites, done to be seen and honored of men, were condemned by Jesus; so all the works that spring from a false and corrupt heart, however right they may be in themselves, lack the sincerity which is an essential element of virtue, and are therefore evil as they stand related to their doer.

And as the corrupt heart imparts its taint to the life that flows out from it, however beautiful that life may be in appearance; so the pure heart purifies the life that issues from it, however faulty that life may be in form. The life that issues from the heart that is clean and true may be lamentably imperfect; it may be marred by ignorance, false conceptions

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

of duty, and many weaknesses; but, though weak in performance, it is faithful in endeavor, it is true in motive and pure in purpose, and it receives the divine approval notwithstanding its outward shortcomings. The motive in which it takes its rise—the spirit from which it proceeds—excuses its failures, sanctifies its imperfections, and wins for it the approval of the righteous Judge. In the words of Carlyle: “It is not thy works, which are all mortal, infinitely little, and the greatest no greater than the least, but only the spirit thou workest in, that can have worth or continuance.”

Moreover, the state of the heart determines the happiness, as well as the moral character, of the life. Men are ever deluding themselves with the idea that happiness may be found in a change of outward conditions, and wasting their lives in vainly seeking it among the things of the world. Yet all human experience bears witness that such outward things can not yield it. As color is not a property inherent in bodies, but in the light that they reflect through the eye upon the brain; so happiness does not lie in our

KEEPING THE HEART

surroundings, but in the impression which the surroundings make upon our hearts. And the character of the impression made by outward things upon the heart is largely determined by the state of the heart itself. As Coleridge says:

“O Lady, we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live:
Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud.”

Ourselves impart to our surroundings the gay or somber hues in which they appear to us. The state of our own souls clothes life with the light of bridal joy, or shrouds it in the gloom of mourning. The heart that is beating out of tune hears no music in the divinest hymn, while the heart that is beating in tune hears the melodies of the everlasting chime rising in tones clear and sweet above all the sounds of human care and strife and toil and sorrow.

“The heart gives life its beauty,
Its glory and its power—
'Tis sunlight to its rippling stream,
And soft dew to its flower.”

It is, then, of the utmost importance that the heart should be so kept that the streams of life issuing from it will be

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

pure, beautiful, and joyful. It should be so purged of impure and selfish desires and affections that the holy One may find therein no rival to contest his right to any part thereof. Its doors should be kept shut and barred against all ungodly pleasures and unrighteous gains and unholy ambitions and unhallowed pursuits. It should be kept as a fountain on which a seal is set to keep its waters pure and clear for Him who made it; or as a holy temple dedicated to him, and swept and garnished for his indwelling. Only to the extent that it is thus consecrated to him will the streams of life issuing from it be peaceful, satisfying, and joyful.

But how can the heart be kept? It can not be controlled as the movements of the body are. The desires and affections do not yield obedience to the will, like the muscles that guide the hand or the foot. Sorrow and joy do not go and come, hate does not give place to love, despondency does not change into cheerfulness, the emotions do not assume new character, just as one may command. The heart can not be controlled by the exercise of will-power brought to bear directly

KEEPING THE HEART

upon it, but must be wrought upon indirectly through the use of means suited to effect the end desired. It must be changed from one state into another by suitable moral influences brought to bear upon it. As the void and formless earth was kept steadily under the movings of God's Spirit and slowly emerged from chaos into a shapely world, the evil heart must be kept constantly under purifying and ennobling influences that it may be purified, ennobled, and made holy.

Among such influences are good thoughts. The human heart has been likened to an ever-grinding mill, thoughts being the grain which it grinds. When the grain is good, the mill keeps clean and produces good flour; but when the grain is bad, the mill itself is made foul and the flour is unfit for use. The heart, then, must be kept free from the influence of harmful thoughts. And harmful thoughts include not only such as are impure and corrupting in themselves, but such as are trifling, useless, and vain, and, though not positively vicious in themselves, shut out the beams of truth from the soul and keep it barren of virtue. The heart that is

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

“Like a broad highway or a populous street,
Where vain and idle thoughts have leave to meet,
Pause, or pass on, as in an open mart,”

may not become grossly corrupt, but it will never rise to strong and manly virtue. As the body can not be made strong and healthy without nutritious food, the heart can not be rooted and grounded in righteousness while it is fed on thoughts that have in them no spiritual nutriment. It must be nourished with true and good thoughts that it may become true and good. If one will think on “whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are virtuous, whatsoever things are praiseworthy,” his heart, taking character from companionship with such high and holy things, will become true and honest and just and pure.

To be rightly kept, the heart must be exercised in benevolent effort. Just as exercise strengthens the muscles of the body, the exercise of good feelings in good works develops and strengthens those feelings. Those who freely obey

KEEPING THE HEART

the promptings of their better nature, and give expression to their good feelings in good works, rise higher in the scale of benevolence, have the law of love written more deeply in their hearts, and find their souls more and more thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Christ; while, on the other hand, those who refuse to act in obedience to the promptings of their better nature become harder and yet harder in heart, having their finer sympathies blunted, their diviner sensibilities dulled, and all their nobler impulses and aspirations dwarfed and deadened. He who would keep his heart growing Godward and heavenward must obey its Godward tendencies and heavenly impulses. He must pour out its gratitude in thanksgiving, that it may become more grateful; pour out its love in devotion and service, that it may grow more loving; and let its every divine feeling find expression in corresponding effort, that it may become more divine.

“For the heart grows rich in giving. Self-entwined,
Its strength sinks low;
It can only live in loving, and by serving
Love will grow.”

IV

THOUGHTS FOR "THE DAY OF AFFLICTION"

I.

"PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING."

MOST of us have earnestly desired to be released from the struggles and sufferings incident to life. We would like to have its sunshine without its shadow, its joys without its sorrows. But in this we are like one who refuses bread and foolishly cries for a stone. To have our vain desire granted would be to secure a transient pleasure at the cost of eternal gain. It would be to enjoy a few fleeting hours of ease at the cost of strength of character, nobility of soul, and all that goes to make up the highest and most heroic manhood.

Some one has illustrated this by giving the result of his attempt to aid an emperor-moth in its effort to free itself

THE DAY OF AFFLICTION

from its flask-shaped cocoon. He says: "During the whole forenoon I watched it patiently striving and struggling to get out. It never seemed able to get beyond a certain point, and at last my patience was exhausted. I resolved to give it a helping hand. With the point of my scissors, I clipped the confining threads to make the exit a little easier; and, immediately, out crawled the moth, dragging a huge, swollen body and little, shriveled wings. . . . I watched to see these assume their due proportions, and to see the creature appear in all its perfect beauty; but I looked in vain. My false tenderness had proved its ruin. It never was anything but a stunted abortion, crawling painfully through that brief life which it should have spent flying through the air on rainbow wings."

And, just as the life of that moth was ruined by delivering it from the struggles and sufferings which nature—the law of God—imposed upon it, our lives would be marred and our ruin would be wrought if we should be freed from the trials and sorrows through which, in the natural course of things, we are called to pass.

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

As we come to appreciate the truth that the highest life must be won through our own struggles—as we come to see that no one can be raised to a state of blessedness by the interposition of power from without, but that every one must “eat bread in the sweat of his own face”—we come to understand what has been called “the hardness” of God’s love. The love of our Father is not a soft, weak sentiment which shrinks from subjecting us to needed suffering; it is not a short-sighted, foolish feeling which considers the present only, and aims to bestow nothing higher than temporary ease and enjoyment; but its purpose is to educate, develop, and perfect the divine spirit within us and make us, in the fullest possible measure, “partakers of the divine nature.” The supreme end for which we are fashioned, and to which our Father is patiently leading us, is the perfection of our characters—the bringing of our spirits into perfect agreement with the Eternal, so that we will desire and love and purpose and do that only which is good. To accomplish this, the Father leads us through trials and struggles and

THE DAY OF AFFLICTION

sufferings, even though they are grievous and hard to bear.

In no other way can this end be gained. Were it possible for a higher power to interpose and deliver us from these travails of birth into higher life, the interposition would be as unwise as clipping the confining threads to make easier the exit of the moth from its cocoon. While affording us present relief, it would rob us of the "glorious liberty of the sons of God," and doom us to a life weak, stunted, and deformed. As Jesus, our Elder Brother, was made "perfect through suffering," we must be brought into the perfect life through tribulations. In the words of Paul: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." It works out for us the glory of a character which will outlive all the pleasures and pomps and splendors of this present world, and which, when the angel of destruction shall have crumbled all earthly crowns into dust, will still stand, resting on the true "Rock of Ages," reaching up into the highest heavens, and joyously basking in the

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

everlasting light of God's presence. It is not strange that Paul, contemplating the glory which the Father was working out for him through the trials and tribulations to which he was subjected, said: "I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses."

II.

THE CUP GIVEN BY THE FATHER.

When the cup which, in the darkness and loneliness of Gethsemane, he had prayed might pass from him, was placed before him, Jesus looked upon it as a gift of God, and said: "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink of it?" Since it had come to him notwithstanding his earnest prayer that, if possible, it might pass, he regarded it as sent by the Father who, being infinite in wisdom and love, can give his children nothing that is not good. Thus regarding it, he accepted it willingly and drank of it without a murmur.

"His lips sobbed through the water rank,
His heart paused in him while he drank,
His brain beat heart-like—rose and sank."

THE DAY OF AFFLICTION

And, thus drinking, he found the cup to be an exceedingly precious gift, bringing to him glory and honor and highest blessing. "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name."

And is there not something in this to comfort and encourage us when the shadows fall darkly over our lives? To every man's lips is placed, sooner or later, the cup of suffering. In the lives of most of us there are days of cloud and rain and storm and tempest, when "the desire of our eyes is taken from us" and we are "brought into so great trouble and misery that we go mourning all the day long." We pray that the cup of sorrow may pass from us; but, instead of passing, it is pressed more closely to our quivering lips. Shall we say that our prayer is unanswered? Shall we think that God has forgotten us; or that he is unmerciful, and careless of our pain and anguish? Let us learn from the story of Jesus that it is not so. Let us learn from the great-hearted and patient sufferer, who prayed

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

in Gethsemane and was answered with Calvary, that, since the cup does not pass from us in answer to our prayer, it is a gift from the hand of our Father, who loves us more than any earthly father ever loved, and who must become false to himself and destroy the foundation on which his throne is built, ere he can hear without pity the cry of one of his children in distress, or give to that child a gift that is not good.

And, believing this, instead of pressing from us the cup which the Father's hand holds out to us, let us, like the Master, drink of it without murmuring, however bitter the draught may be. We shall not fail to find this "bitter drink a wholesome drink." In the dregs of the cup, we shall find "a pearl of great price" which we can find nowhere else—a divine glory and a heavenly peace which nothing but this drink can give. "No cross, no crown," is neither a fiction of priests nor an arbitrary decree of Heaven: it is a truth founded in the nature of things. Crosses are as pruning to a vine, cutting off hindering growths and making for richer, more abundant and more fruitful life. The

THE DAY OF AFFLICTION

“ eyes
That look for visions and surprise
From influent angels, must shut down
Their lids first upon sun and moon,
The head asleep upon a stone.”

Hence, the bitter cup is given to us by our Father. “Whom he loveth he chasteneth.” As, after the poet drank of the dark pool “where weights of shadow were downcast,” “a slow kiss crowned his forehead” and “his eyelids flew back for the bliss . . . ;” so, after we have drained the cup given by the Father, we shall feel the lingering kiss of divine love on our brows, our souls will be filled with a heavenly harmony, and our whole being will be thrilled with the joy of a new and higher life. When, like the divine Sufferer, we wish for nothing better than the Father gives, and trustingly drink of the cup of bereavement, or sickness, or pain, or poverty, or sorrow of any kind which the Father’s hand holds out to us, we also shall be exalted. Our Father, if we will look to him, will strengthen us to bear all the pain and bitterness of it; and after a little while—when our spirits have been chastened until they reflect his image as the mirror reflects the face of

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

one who looks into it, and our natures have been purified, ennobled, and fitted for beatific visions and celestial harmonies and heavenly raptures—he will take us up out of all our tribulations into his glorious presence, and “wipe away all tears from our eyes.”

Then, as Jesus, “for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God,” let us endure unto the end, bearing with patience the burdens that may be laid upon us, so that we also may be lifted up and permitted to “sit with him in his throne.”

“Sweet cup of sorrow,
I would drink thee!
Cup of unearthly wine,
As thy lip touches mine,
I would bethink me:
‘Christ, my joy and hope,
Once drained a bitterer cup;
Let me then drink thee up!’

“Though thou art bitter,
Love is in thee.
Pledge of the brighter wine,
Let my pale lips touch thine;
For within thee
Are the blessings seven;
O cup, O wine of heaven,
At the high banquet given!”

THE DAY OF AFFLICTION

III.

“THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD.”

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.” So sang David in the twenty-third Psalm, which has probably banished more doubts, quieted more fears, and “charmed more griefs to rest” than any other song in the whole range of literature. It has comforted sorrowing hearts through all the generations since it was written, and will continue to comfort them until the last of God’s pilgrim sons and daughters is safe in the home where sorrows can not come.

It has been aptly called “the nightingale of the Psalms”; for, like the bird that cheers the night with song, it sings its strain of joyous confidence in the dark hours of suffering. When we are staggering beneath the burdens and sorely distressed by the trials of life, it points us to the true source of consolation and encouragement. It calls us to the child-like trust in our heavenly Father which will free us from all wearing anxieties and peace-destroying fears. It teaches us that the Lord, our Shepherd, is caring for

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

us, so that we shall not want. But, alas! we are slow to learn the lesson of trust. We often find it difficult to realize that God is thus caring for us.

OUR SEEMING INSIGNIFICANCE

May hinder the realization of it. When we contemplate the universe, with its unnumbered worlds sweeping through space, and its marvelous creations, both animate and inanimate, we feel that we are "but atoms 'midst immensity," and we may find it difficult to believe that he who fashioned and rules this immensity concerns himself in the affairs of such insignificant atoms. We recognize the fact that God makes provision for his creatures in a general way, but we find it hard to believe that he takes the oversight of each member of his great family, and adapts his providence to each one's peculiar needs. We are willing to admit that he takes charge of the destinies of nations, but we do not so readily see that he takes charge of the lives of individuals, notes their downsitting and uprising, and leads them in all their ways. We recognize his guiding hand in great things, but

THE DAY OF AFFLICTION

do not so easily recognize it in small things.

But he is the Lord and Shepherd of the small and great alike. He notes the fall of the sparrow as well as the flight of the eagle. He gives the lily a garment of beauty as truly as he gives the sun a robe of fire. He is the God of individuals as well as nations. He was the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob just as surely as he was the God of the Israelites. He led the boy Joseph into Egypt just as certainly as he led the children of Israel out of Egypt. He fed Elijah in his hiding-place by Cherith no less surely than he fed the host in the wilderness of Sin. We fail to rightly appreciate God's providence when we think of him as providing for his children in a general way only. If we would regard his providing care truly, and have our souls rest in him with a peace that passeth thought, we must learn to think of him as not only giving sunshine and the rain and the fertile soil and the seedtime and the harvest-home to all the world, but as also watching over the poor widow's barrel of meal, and suffering not her cruse of oil to fail.

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

It is thus that he is represented in the song of David. It says: "The Lord is *my* shepherd." He is caring for *my* wants, and making provision for *my* individual needs.

The good shepherd's care for each one of his flock is beautifully and touchingly shown in Christ's parable of the lost sheep. The ninety and nine are safe; but the *one* is missing—has wandered away from the flock and is lost in the desert. And the shepherd goes out into the darkness, searching for the missing *one*. Nor does he abandon the search until the lost *one* is found. "And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing," and bringeth it home, and calleth his neighbors to rejoice with him. He goes after the *one* that has got into trouble, and tenderly and joyfully brings it to safety and peace. To each one of his flock the divine Shepherd saith: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Friends may betray you, and loved ones may prove false; but God will be with you, to guide and defend you, through all your earthly pilgrimage. And when your task on earth is done, and the chill waters

THE DAY OF AFFLICTION

of the river of death are laving your feet, you may still joyously sing:

“E’en death’s cold wave I will not flee;
For God through Jordan leadeth me.”

Perhaps we can not believe that God takes such an interest in us, and thus cares for us individually, because of

A SENSE OF UNWORTHINESS.

We find ourselves so imperfect, so weak, and so sinful that we may think the all-righteous Father can not love and specially care for us. This is a natural and, doubtless, a common feeling. But, in feeling thus, we give prominence to our worse self and fail to appreciate our better self—fail to appreciate the fact that, notwithstanding all our sinfulness, there is deep down in our hearts a yearning for better things, a longing for a purer life, a hungering and thirsting after righteousness; and that, like Paul, we do what we wish not to do and leave undone what we wish to do. But the Father, knowing us altogether, understanding us better than we understand ourselves, sees and appreciates this yearning for purity—this germ of goodness—within us, and

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

loves us and tenderly cares for us because of it.

Probably you have seen a gardener, in the early springtime, go to a dry, knotty, and seemingly lifeless vine, and carefully prune it, and tie up its branches, and dig around it, and fertilize the soil about its roots; and you know that he thus tended it, not because of what it then appeared to be, but because he knew there was in it a hidden life which, under the genial influences of the advancing season, would develop into luxuriant foliage and rich clusters of ripe fruit. And so the Father comes to us, weak and sinful as we are, and cares tenderly for us, not because he loves our weakness and sinfulness, but because he sees the yearning after holiness within us, which, by and by, under the blessed influences of his gospel and his providence, will be developed into the "beauty of the Lord our God." He sees in us the dim outlines of a picture which after awhile, in a brighter world, if not in this, will become a miniature of himself; and he loves, not the blurs of the outline, but the ever-brightening picture. Let us not, then, permit thoughts of our

THE DAY OF AFFLICTION

unworthiness to come between us and a full realization of the fact that the Lord is our Shepherd, and will unfailingly care for us.

But perhaps we may doubt this comforting and peace-giving truth because

OUR DESIRES ARE NOT GRANTED.

Because we do not get what we wish and pray for, and are not feeding in what seem to us green pastures and being led beside what we take to be still waters, we may suppose that the Shepherd is taking no interest in us and making no provision for us. We think, perhaps, that, if the Lord were caring for us, we would not have so much toil and trouble and sorrow—our lives would not be so full of bitterness and so barren of pleasure. But, in thus reasoning, we forget that the Shepherd knows better than the sheep what they really need and what pasturage is good for them. The sheep are short-sighted, and can not look beyond the present time and place; the Shepherd is far-seeing, and may perceive dangers of which they can not know. He sees, it may be, that what we think we need

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

is just the thing that we do not need. In the pastures that look to us so rich and green and inviting, he may see poisonous weeds that would destroy us. He may know that the waters which seem to us so still and peaceful, under the pleasant shade of the trees, are bordered by quicksands that would swallow us up, if we were to go on them. And because he sees that what we desire would be hurtful to us, he withholds it from us.

“I have seen a shepherd,” says a noted Scotch minister, “on a bitter, snowy day, gathering all his sheep carefully to the windy side of the hill. The silly creatures, left to themselves, would all take the other side; they would go straight to the most dangerous places, to the sheltered spots where the deep snow-wreaths form silently, in which they would soon find at once a refuge and a grave. On such a day the life of some of the sheep depends on facing the blast. The shepherd would not let the youngest, he would not let the weakest one of the flock, lie down in the shelter. For the very love he bears it, ‘he leads it out,’ or drives, or carries it—even in such an hour as that, facing the

THE DAY OF AFFLICTION

bitter wind and the blinding snow." Like the silly sheep, we do not see what is best for us; and we are often restless and fretful because the wise and good Shepherd keeps us on "the windy side of the hill." Surely it is better to trust in him and let him choose for us, and walk resignedly in the path along which he leads us, whether it be through green meadows and beside softly flowing waters, or over jagged rocks and up the rugged mountain-side.

IV.

SELECTIONS.

"YOUR SORROW SHALL BE TURNED INTO JOY."—When the storm is upon us, it seems as if there never could be any sunshine more; but our hopelessness does not keep back the sun when his hour to shine is come. . . . When one is miserable, misery seems the law of being. There is some thought which it seems nothing can ever set right; but all at once it is gone, broken up and gone, like a hail-cloud. . . . Do you know why things so often come right? I would say *always* come right, only that is matter of faith, not

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

sight. . . . It is because things are all alive, and the life at the heart of them, that which keeps them going, is the great, beautiful God. So the sun forever returns after the clouds. A doubting man, like him who wrote the Book of Ecclesiastes, puts the evil last, and says the clouds return after the rain; but the Christian knows that

“One has mastery
Who makes the joy the last in every song.”

It is neither time nor eternity, nor human consolation, nor everlasting sleep, nor the satisfied judgment that is the cure for all things; it is the heart, the will, the being of the Father; while that remains, can the irremediable, the irredeemable exist? If there arose, in the heart of one of his creatures, a grief not otherwise to be destroyed, he would take it into himself, and there consume it in his own creative fire—himself bearing the grief, carrying the pain of the sorrow. For did not Christ die? and would he not die again rather than leave room for one irremediable loss in the realms of his love—that is, of his creation? . . . Instead of our being at the end of things, where they are

THE DAY OF AFFLICTION

all growing old and drawing near to their final rest, we are but in the beginnings and on the threshold of creation; our Father is as young as ever he was; a God who, while he is the Ancient of Days, can yet never grow old; and he who has filled the dull, unbelieving nations with food and gladness, has a splendor of delight ever preparing for the souls which as constantly as he is creating as constantly is he educating and enlarging to the receiving and holding of his mighty, ever-growing joy.—*George Macdonald*.

“Come, ye disconsolate, where’er ye languish,
Come, at the shrine of God fervently kneel;
Here bring your wounded hearts, here tell your
anguish—

Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can not heal.

—*Thomas Moore*.

THE EXCEEDING REWARD OF AFFLICTION.
—As much as moments are exceeded by eternity; and the sighing of a man by the joy of an angel; and a salutary frown by the light of God’s countenance; and a few groans by the infinite and eternal hallelujahs—so much are the sorrows of the saints to be undervalued, in respect of what is deposited for them in the

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

treasures of eternity. Their sorrows can die, but so can not their joys. . . . Every chain is a ray of light, and every prison is a palace, and every loss is the purchase of a kingdom, and every affront in the cause of God is an eternal honor, and every day of sorrow is a thousand years of comfort, multiplied with a never-ceasing numeration: days without night; joys without sorrow; sanctity without sin; charity without stain; possession without fear; society without envying; communication of joys without lessening; and they shall dwell in a blessed country, where an enemy never entered, and from whence a friend never went away.—*Bishop Taylor.*

Be resigned,
Thou child of sorrow, to His sovereign will;
Drink, as He bids, the bitter cup, and bear
Thy cross in patience! From the holy hill
A gleam shall cheer thee, till, safe-harbored there,
Thou feel how faintly earth's severest ill.
May with the weight of heavenly joys compare.
—*Richard Mant.*

BENEFIT OF SUFFERING.—I know enough of gardening to understand that, if I would have a tree grow upon its south side, I must cut off the branches there. Then all its forces go to repairing the in-

THE DAY OF AFFLICTION

jury; and twenty buds shoot out where, otherwise, there would have been but one. When we reach the garden above, we shall find that out of those very wounds over which we sighed and groaned on earth, have sprung verdant branches, bearing precious fruit, a thousand-fold.—*Beecher.*

The hour of anguish passes by;
But in the spirit there remains
The outgrowth of its agony,
The compensation of its pains—
In meekness, which suspects no wrong;
In patience, which endures control;
In faith, which makes the spirit strong;
In peace and purity of soul.

—*Thomas C. Upham.*

THE DISCIPLINE OF SORROW.—SORROW is the noblest of all discipline. Our nature shrinks from it; but it is not the less for the greatness of our nature. It is a scourge; but there is healing in its stripes. It is a chalice, and the drink is bitter; but strength proceeds from the bitterness. It is a crown of thorns; but it becomes a wreath of light on the brow which it has lacerated. It is a cross on which the spirit groans; but every Calvary has an Olivet. To every place of crucifixion there is likewise a place of as-

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

cension. The sun that was shrouded is unveiled, and heaven opens with hopes eternal to the soul which was nigh unto despair.—*H. Giles.*

The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown;
No traveler e'er reached that blest abode
Who found not thorns and briers in his road.

.
But He, who knew what human hearts would prove,
How slow to learn the dictates of His love,
That, hard by nature, and of stubborn will,
A life of ease would make them harder still,
In pity to the souls His grace designed
To rescue from the ruins of mankind,
Called for a cloud to darken all their years,
And said, "Go spend them in the vale of tears."

—*William Cowper.*

THE GODWARD PULL OF TRIALS.—Trial brings man face to face with God—God and he touch; and the flimsy veil of bright cloud that hung between him and the sky is blown away. He feels that he is standing outside the earth, with nothing between him and the eternal Infinite. Oh! there is something in the sick-bed, and the aching heart, and the restlessness and the languor of shattered health, and the sorrow of affections withered, and the stream of life poisoned at its fountain, and the

THE DAY OF AFFLICTION

cold, lonely feeling of utter rawness of heart which is felt when God strikes home in earnest, that forces a man to feel what is real, and what is not.—*Frederick W. Robertson.*

Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee!
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me,
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee!

—*Mrs. S. F. Adams.*

V

THE CHILD'S CRY AND THE FATHER'S ANSWER

THE CRY.

The way is dark, my Father! Cloud on cloud
Is gathering thickly o'er my head, and loud
The thunders roar above me. See, I stand
Like one bewildered! Father, take my hand,
And through the gloom
Lead safely home
Thy child.

The day goes fast, my Father! and the night
Is drawing darkly down. My faithless sight
Sees ghostly visions. Fears, a spectral band,
Encompass me. O Father! take my hand,
And from the night
Lead up to light
Thy child.

The way is long, my Father! and my soul
Longs for the rest and quiet of the goal:
While yet I journey through this weary land,
Keep me from wandering. Father, take my hand;
Quickly and straight
Lead to heaven's gate
Thy child.

The path is rough, my Father! Many a thorn
Has pierced me; and my weary feet, all torn

THE CRY AND THE ANSWER

And bleeding, mark the way. Yet thy command
Bids me press forward. Father, take my hand;
 Then, safe and blest,
 Lead up to rest
 Thy child.

The throng is great, my Father! Many a doubt
And fear and danger compass me about;
And foes oppress me sore. I can not stand
Or go alone. O Father! take my hand,
 And through the throng
 Lead safe along
 Thy child.

The cross is heavy, Father! I have borne
It long, and still do bear it. Let my worn
And fainting spirit rise to that blest land
Where crowns are given. Father, take my hand
 And, reaching down,
 Lead to the crown
 Thy child.

THE ANSWER.

The way is dark, my child; but leads to light;
I would not always have thee walk by sight.
My dealings now thou canst not understand.
I meant it so; but I will take thy hand,
 And through the gloom
 Lead safely home
 My child.

The day goes fast, my child! But is the night
Darker to me than day? In me is light!
Keep close to me, and every spectral band
Of fears shall vanish. I will take thy hand,
 And through the night
 Lead up to light
 My child.

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

The way is long, my child! But it shall be
Not one step longer than is best for thee,
And thou shalt know, at last, when thou shalt stand
Safe at the goal, how I did take thy hand
And quick and straight
Lead to heaven's gate
My child.

The path is rough, my child! But, oh! how sweet
Will be the rest, for weary pilgrims meet,
When thou shalt reach the borders of that land
To which I lead thee, as I take thy hand,
And safe and blest
With me shalt rest,
My child.

The throng is great, my child! But at thy side
Thy Father walks. Then, be not terrified,
For I am with thee; will thy foes command
To let thee freely pass; will take thy hand,
And through the throng
Lead safe along
My child.

The cross is heavy, child! Yet there was One
Who bore a heavier for thee: my Son,
My well beloved. For him bear thine; and stand
With him at last; and from thy Father's hand,
Thy cross laid down,
Receive a crown,
My child. —H. N. C.

VI

THE CHRISTIAN'S WANTS

I want that adorning divine,
Thou only, my God, canst bestow;
I want in those beautiful garments to shine
Which distinguished thy household below.

(Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.—Col. 3:12-14.)

I want, oh! I want to attain
Some likeness, my Saviour, to thee:
That longed-for resemblance to gain,
Thy comeliness put upon me.

(It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.—1 John 3:2, 3.)

I want to be marked for thine own;

Thy seal on my forehead to wear;

To receive that “new name” on the mystic white
stone,

Which only thyself canst declare.

(To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.—Rev. 2:17.)

I want, every moment, to feel

That the Spirit does dwell in my heart;

That his power is present to cleanse and to heal,

And newness of life to impart.

(For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. . . . The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him that we may be also glorified together.—Rom. 8:14, 16, 17.)

I want so in thee to abide,

As to bring forth some fruit to thy praise;

The branch that thou prunest, though feeble and dried,

May languish, but never decays.

THE CHRISTIAN'S WANTS

(Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch can not bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.—John 15:4, 5.)

I want thine own hand to unbind
Each tie to terrestrial things
Too tenderly cherished, too closely entwined,
Where my heart too tenaciously clings.

(Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.—1 John 2:15, 16.)

I want, by my aspect serene,
My actions and words, to declare
That my treasure is placed in a country unseen,
That my heart and affections are there.

(Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.—Matt. 6:19-21.)

I want, as a traveler, to haste
Straight onward, nor pause on my way;
No forethought or anxious contrivance to waste
On my tent, only pitched for a day.

(For here have we no continuing city,
but we seek one to come.—Heb. 13:14).

I want (and this sums up my prayer)
To glorify thee till I die;
Then calmly to yield up my soul to thy care,
And breathe out in prayer my last sigh.

(For I am now ready to be offered,
and the time of my departure is at hand.
I have fought a good fight, I have finished
my course, I have kept the faith: hence-
forth there is laid up for me a crown
of righteousness.—2 Tim. 4:6-8. Lord
Jesus, receive my spirit.—Acts 7:59.)
—*Poem from "The Changed Cross."*

VII

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

“Whom God hath made the heads of families,
He hath made priests to offer sacrifice.
Daily let part of Holy Writ be read,
Let, as the body, so the soul have bread;
For look, how many souls in thy house be,
With just as many souls God trusteth thee.”

THE family underlies and gives character to the state. Out of a nation's homes are the issues of its life. They are the fountains whence flow the streams of its existence—pure, refreshing, and life-giving, or polluted, poisoned, and death-dealing. Ancient Rome owed her greatness to the sanctity of her domestic ties and the sacredness of her homes. “The whole structure of the Roman Commonwealth,” we are told, “arose, compacted and mortised together, but resting on the foundation of the hearthstone. . . . And she fell not till she was corrupted and tainted at the heart. The

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

domestic corruption preceded the political. When there was no longer purity on her hearthstones, there ceased to be integrity in her Senate, and not till then was her death-knell rung." History teaches that a nation stands or falls according to the character of its home life.

It is, then, a patriotic duty to make our homes temples of God, in which the parents are God's ministers, training their children, by precept and example, to the highest manhood and womanhood, and forming in them the disposition which will lead them to follow after the things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and praiseworthy. Burns, after describing family worship in the cotter's humble home, where the "priestlike father" reverently reads to his children from the sacred page and "proffers up to heaven the warm request" that the Lord will provide for him and his loved ones, and "chiefly in their hearts with grace divine preside," says: "From scenes like these Scotia's grandeur springs." From such scenes sprang the true and ennobling home life which produced the heroes and heroines who made

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

our own country glorious in the past; and such scenes are needed to keep alive the manhood and womanhood that will uphold and perpetuate its glory.

The desire to promote happiness in the home circle, no less than the desire to so train their children that they will become upright, honorable, and useful men and women, should impel parents to diligently observe family worship. The father who daily gathers the members of his family around him for the worship of God, and seeks to draw them heavenward by divine teaching and godly example, uses the most effective means of overcoming the evil passions and tendencies that give rise to discord, and preserving peace, good will, and happiness in his household. The happiest home is one in which truth, goodness, honor, harmony, and love are nourished, and nothing nourishes them like communion with God and divine things.

“List to the Saviour’s words! ‘Where two or three
Meet in my name, there in the midst am I.’
Believe, and welcome to thy family
The gracious Guest; and by His blessing try
How much domestic bliss and amity
Hang on domestic worship’s hallowing tie.”

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

From a religious point of view, every one must acknowledge the obligation to keep the fires of devotion to God brightly burning in the home. Although it may not be expressly commanded in the New Testament, the home altar is needed to shape the domestic life in accordance with New Testament teaching, and to faithfully perform the duty of bringing the children up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Let no one suppose that worship in the home is rendered unnecessary by public worship. Each promotes the other; and experience teaches that, where the sacrifice of praise, thanksgiving, and prayer is not offered on the family altar, public worship is either neglected altogether, or becomes little more than empty conformity to custom.

But however conducive to the welfare of the nation, the happiness of the home, and the prosperity of the church, family worship may be, its benefits are largely conditional. In order that it may, in the fullest measure, promote the well-being of the household, and through them the well-being of church and state, those who

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

conduct it must live consistently with their teaching and their prayers. The father who teaches his children that the service of the Lord yields the only enduring good, and prays that they may "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," and then goes forth himself to "seek first" the things of the world, counteracts the good influence of his home worship by his example. "His works pull exactly contrary to the pull of his prayers and teaching;" and his children will be quick to see it and be adversely influenced by it. Where there is such inconsistency between the prayers and the lives of the parents, it is not strange that children grow up to be godless despite the regular observance of worship in their homes.

That worship in the home may be productive of the best results, it must not be permitted to degenerate into mere formality. To guard against this, the parents should study to keep it free from depressing austerity and solemnity, and make it interesting and attractive. There should be hymns of an inspiring and joyful character, in the singing of which the

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

children will gladly join. The Scripture lesson should be selected with consideration; should be short, and impressively read; and, when feasible, should be applicable to the circumstances of the household. After the lesson from the Bible, some minutes may be profitably spent in familiar conversation about it, the children being encouraged to talk as freely as they would about a lesson from some other book. They should be made to feel that God is not a stern, harsh despot before whom they must come with cringing fear, and of whom they must think and speak with the timidity arising from dread; but a tender and loving Father, who does not wish his sons and daughters to be afraid of him, but would have them think and speak of him with the confidence of a little child in a loving mother. The prayers, too, should be short, and followed by the Lord's Prayer, slowly recited by all. The brief season of worship, thoughtfully prepared for by the parents beforehand, should leave the household thinking of God as a loving Father, and cheerful and joyful, rather than cast down and gloomy.

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

To give a form for the observance of worship in the family seems undesirable; for the daily repetition of such a form would tend to deprive the worship of freshness, interest, and fervor, and make it little more than a lifeless and unprofitable routine. It is hoped, however, that the following collection of prayers, with indicated Scripture lessons, may be suggestive and helpful. To give greater variety and value to the collection, ten of the petitions are selections from "Great Souls in Prayer."

PRAYERS.

I. Psalm 103, and 2 Pet. 1:2-9.

O Lord our God, thy throne is established in the heavens and thy kingdom ruleth over all, yet thou dost condescend to consider us, and to watch over and care for us with ineffable tenderness and love. Reverently we bow in thy presence, and lift up our hearts in praise, thanksgiving, and prayer to thee.

We praise thee for thy goodness and for thy wonderful works to the children of men. When we call to mind the mani-

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

fold manifestations of thy wisdom and benevolence vouchsafed unto us day after day, and especially when we think of thy wondrous love as revealed by thy well-beloved Son, we feel constrained to call upon our souls, and all that is within us, to bless thy holy name.

And we would not forget thy benefits to us. We have been unworthy children, often forgetting thee, neglecting our duty to thee, and doing things displeasing to thee. But thou hast not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. Remembering our weakness, thou hast pitied us as a father pitieth his children; and, notwithstanding our unworthiness, thou hast poured out upon us an unfailing stream of blessings. We thank thee, O Lord, for thy great mercy and forgiving love.

And we pray that, in the days to come, we may be more faithful, more loving, and more obedient children. May we have unwavering faith in thee through all the trials of life; and, giving all diligence, may we add to our faith virtue, and knowledge, and temperance, and patience, and godliness, and brotherly

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

kindness, and charity. May these things so abound in us that we shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. May we become, day by day, more firmly rooted and grounded in righteousness and more fully partakers of the divine nature, more like thee in thought, desire, and purpose, until at last we shall awake in thy likeness and be satisfied forever. Amen.

II. Ps. 37:1-9; Matt. 6:24-34.

O Thou who art wise in heart and mighty in strength, able to succor them that are tried, and save unto the uttermost them that come unto thee, we rejoice that thou dost invite us to commit our way to thee, and cast all our cares on thee, in the full assurance that thou wilt care for us.

And now, O Thou great and loving bearer of the burdens of thy children, we come to thee, bringing all our worries, all our trials, all the things that disquiet us. They are all known to thee, O Lord—our pains of body and our distress of mind—the weaknesses, the sufferings, the disappointments, the heartaches, and all

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

the troubles and afflictions that come to us and sadden our lives. We bring them to thee, praying that, if it be consistent with thy holy will and loving purpose, thou wilt graciously deliver us from them. But if thou dost see that they are needed to wean our affections from the things of the world, purify our hearts, and draw us into closer and sweeter fellowship with thee, take them not from us, we beseech thee, but give us the faith and courage and strength that will enable us to accept them as gifts lovingly bestowed by thee, and to bear them patiently, resignedly, and joyfully.

Mercifully pardon the sins of our past, O Lord; and grant unto us in the future the things, whether pleasant or painful, joyous or sorrowful, that thou, in thine infinite wisdom, shalt see to be necessary to purge our hearts of all sinful desires and affections, and unite us to thyself with a bond of love which no worldly temptation can break. Amen.

III. Psalm 1; Matt. 7: 24-27.

O Lord, the earth is thine, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

dwell therein. We, with all that we are and have, proceed from thee, are sustained by thee, belong unto thee; and only as we delight in thy law, do what thou dost command, and come into spiritual accord with thee, can we find the true end of our being and the rest and peace for which we yearn. When we are restless and discontented, troubled, fearful, discouraged, and depressed, it is because we have not walked in the ways of wisdom to which thou dost call us, and are estranged from thee—because things seen and temporal have so blinded us, and so weakened the impulses of our better nature, that we have failed to rightly appreciate, desire, and pursue the things unseen and eternal.

And now, gracious Father, in our blindness and weakness, we cry unto thee for sight and strength. Wherein we have failed to delight in thy law, and, instead of giving heed to the sayings of thy Son, have walked in the counsel of the ungodly, mercifully pardon us; and, as children rest in the arms of a loving mother, enable us to lay our heads upon thy forgiving bosom, and feel something

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

of the joy and peace which thou alone canst give.

And we pray, our Father, that we may have such a perception of the true and the good, and such a steadfastness of purpose in the pursuit of righteousness, that henceforth we shall live in loving obedience to thy will, and be like the wise man whose house, founded upon a rock, falls not when the floods come and the winds blow. May we come into fuller accord with thee in thought, word, and deed, and so find the peace which the world can neither give nor take away—the peace of God, which passeth thought and floweth on without decrease and endureth forever. Amen.

IV. Luke 15:11-32.

O Thou who inhabitest eternity, we thank thee that thou hast revealed thyself unto us as our Father, and that thou hast imparted to us so much of thy divine nature that we can never find enduring peace and satisfaction away from thee. Blinded by “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,” we may mistake the shadow for the sub-

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

stance, and, fancying that we can find happiness in the vanities of the world, spend our strength in the eager pursuit of earthly riches, honors, and pleasures; but sooner or later, like the prodigal son, we must come to see that such things are husks, and can never appease the hunger of our hearts—that only in thy house, our Father, where the hired servants have enough and to spare, can the craving of our souls be satisfied. And we bless and praise thee that, when our eyes are opened to see the truth and we come back to thee from our wanderings, thou dost run to meet us, and give us a warm kiss of welcome, and call upon all thy house to rejoice with thee because of our return.

We thank thee for the forgiving love that pardons and welcomes us when want and suffering bring us back to thee, but we pray that we may feel our need of thee without wandering away and being scourged into realizing it. May we realize it now. As we go forth to the work that lies before us in life, may we carry with us such a deep and pervading sense of thee as our only refuge and comfort,

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

that the temptations of the world will be powerless to allure us from the paths that lead to thee.

Graciously prepare us for life's duties, bless us according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, and bring us at last into the "inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for thy children." Amen.

V. Rom. 8:13-19, 24-28, 32-39.

Most merciful Father, thou art our refuge from every storm, our succor in every trouble, our comfort in every affliction, and our "present help in every time of need."

Conscious of our unworthiness, knowing that we have sinned against thee in many ways and come far short of the divine calling, we come before thee with shame and penitence; but, rejoicing in the assurance of thy pardoning love, we pray that thou wilt cleanse our hearts from all impure and unholy desires and affections, and grant unto us in full measure the spirit that will change us from glory to glory into the image of the Lord.

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

And believing that thou art causing all things to work together for our good, and that neither death nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from thy love, may we walk with thee confidently and fearlessly day by day, and gratefully and cheerfully accept whatever thou shalt bestow upon us.

O Lord, we know not what we should pray for as we ought. Our eyes are darkened, and we can not see what is best for us. But in our hearts there is a ceaseless longing for something that we have not; a yearning, more or less keenly felt, for more life and fuller; a groaning to rise up out of discord and struggle and sorrow into peace and rest and joy. We pray that thou wilt graciously consider these longings and groanings of the spirit within us and answer them according to thy boundless wisdom and love. Choose for us, O Lord; and quiet all our groanings and fulfill all our longings by bringing us to rest in thy bosom, with hearts beating in time and tune with thine, and rejoicing with a joy unspeakable. Amen.

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

VI. James 1.

Father of lights, from whom cometh every good gift and every perfect gift, and whose gifts are bestowed most bountifully and lovingly, thou art the sun that never sets, but shines with unremitting brightness and warmth, cheering, comforting, and quickening all who do not hide themselves from it in the shades of the world. Thou dost give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide their feet into the way of peace.

We rejoice that with thee there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning; that thou art the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; that, though our vision may be so obscured that we can not see it, the effulgence of thy glory is never dimmed; that though, led by the light of our own weak minds, we often take the wrong for the right, the light of thy wisdom is never darkened, and unerringly discerns and reveals the true and the good; that though we may sin against thee, and become incapable of receiving and enjoying the good and perfect gifts

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

thou dost offer unto us, the warm glow of thy love for us never changes, and thou art always ready to forgive and yearning to bless us.

Enable us, our Father, to open the windows of our darkened minds and hearts so that thou wilt shine in upon them and dispel all the vain imaginations that blind them, and pervert their thoughts and desires. Grant unto us such a vision of thine effulgent glory, infinite wisdom, and ineffable loveliness as will win us wholly to thy service, inspire us with an overpowering desire for thee, and lead us to zealously do every work, cheerfully bear every burden, and joyfully endure every cross that will bring us nearer to thee, and give us the peace that abideth forever. Amen.

VII. Ps. 32:7-11; 33:10-22.

O thou infinite and eternal One, who art the giver and sustainer of all life, we lift up our hearts unto thee in praise and thanksgiving. "Thou art our hiding place; thou shalt preserve us from trouble; thou shalt compass us about with songs of deliverance." Our hearts shall

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

rejoice in thee, and trust in thy holy name. Sometimes thy goodness may be veiled by clouds which our weak vision can not pierce, but we believe that thou art doing all things wisely, lovingly, and well—that, even when thou art leading us through clouds and darkness, thou art leading us into the light of an ampler day.

May this faith dwell in our hearts as it dwelt in the hearts of thy faithful servants of old, and make us, as it made them, patient and courageous and strong in meeting the troubles and performing the duties of life. Amid all the trials that shall come to us, may our souls wait for thee and be of good cheer, believing that in thine own way, which is wisest, and in thine own time, which is best, thou wilt bring us peace and satisfy us with good.

Bless us, we beseech thee, according to thy great goodness and our various needs. May divine love possess our hearts and consecrate us to divine service. May we do what thou dost require of us in all things, not merely because thou dost require it, but because our wills

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

are in perfect accord with thine and we find our highest pleasure in the things that are pleasing to thee.

Give unto us, day by day, whatever may be necessary to our physical and spiritual well-being. Wherein we are weak, give us strength; wherein we are despondent and fearful, give us hope and courage; wherein we are sorrowful, comfort us. Make us more and more like thyself until we shall reflect thine image as the mirror reflects the face of one who looks into it, and have the joy that is found in perfect accord with thee. Amen.

VIII. Gal. 5:14-26; 6:2-10.

Gracious Father, thou dost watch over and care for all the children whom thou hast brought into being, with a vigilance that never sleeps, a wisdom that never errs, and a love that never fails. We pray that thou wilt be with us now, and grant unto each of us a realizing sense of thy presence. May thy Spirit take possession of our hearts and yield the fruit of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance in our lives. May there

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

be shown in our behavior no sourness of temper or harshness of speech—no fretfulness, bickering, ill will, or selfishness; but may we dwell together in peace and love, be always tender-hearted and forgiving, and ready at all times to cheerfully bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. Through all the stress and storm of this life, may we hold fast to thee and to one another; and, when we shall lay our burdens down and pass through the gates of death into thy presence, may each of us be welcomed to the kingdom prepared for the righteous and to joy at thy right hand forever. Amen.

IX. Matt. 25:14-30.

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things. We, thy dependent creatures, bow before thee, and thank thee for the life which thou hast given us. We thank thee that thou hast not made us in all respects alike, but, by endowing us differently, hast bestowed upon us the manifold pleasures and benefits arising from diversity in thoughts, feelings, and capacities. May we so recognize thy wis-

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

dom and goodness in this that we shall neither envy those who are more richly endowed than ourselves, nor look down upon those of poorer gifts. May we feel that our talents, whether great or small, belong to thee, and are committed to our trust to be used in thy service; that thou wilt require of every one according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not; and that we deserve, and shall receive from thee, praise or censure, not for the gifts thou hast intrusted to us, but for the use we make of them.

And we beseech thee, O Lord our God, to help us so that we may neither neglect them and permit them to die of disuse, nor use them to further selfish or unworthy ends, but freely exercise them in lovingly serving others, and thus serving thee. Even though we may have but one talent, may we not esteem it worthless and bury it, but make it conducive to the accomplishment of thy righteous purposes, remembering that "the commonest service is divine service"; that he "who sweeps a room, as for thy will, makes that and the action fine"; and that he who puts but an atom of brightness and sweetness into

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

the life of any man or woman is a co-worker with thee.

May we "do the thing we can, and not presume to fret because it's little"; and, in doing little services day by day, may we climb the stairway that leads to thee, and come at last into the glory of thy presence, and with glad hearts hear thee say unto each of us: "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Amen.

X. 1 Corinthians 13.

Unto thee, O Lord, belong all attributes that are worthy of praise; but over all, controlling and directing all, is love. Thou art Love, and all thy works are loving. As a Father in whose heart there glows the love that seeketh not its own, that suffereth long and is kind, and that never faileth, thou dost think of us, work for us, care for us, protect us, and provide for us. Whether it be thine approving smile or thy chastening frown, that which thou dost bestow upon us is given in love, and designed for our good. It is

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

because thou dost love us and desire our happiness, and dost know that only in thine arms can our troubled souls find rest, that thou dost call us to thyself and ask us to give thee our hearts.

We pray, O Lord, that we may be enabled to truly answer thy loving call. May we not only praise thee with our lips, but worship thee in spirit and in truth. May there be awakened in our hearts that divine love without which tongues, knowledge, faith, and all outward works, profit nothing; which will destroy all that is evil and nourish all that is good within us; and which will mold our lives into full accord with thy self-giving life.

Take our hearts, our Father, unworthy of thy love as they are; and, if gentler measures will not avail, send unto them thy chastening ministers to purify them, and make them perfect in the love that uniteth to thee, casteth out tormenting fear, beareth all things, never faileth, and giveth peace forever. Amen.

XI. Phil. 2:1-16.

Gracious and ever-merciful God, the heavens declare thy glory, and the firma-

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

ment showeth thy handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. The worlds above that circle through space, unerringly guided by thee; the sun that floods with light and warmth the world in which we live; the fruitful earth, which is full of thy goodness; the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field; all the texts in nature's marvelous Bible, when rightly interpreted—bear witness to thy power, and wisdom, and goodness. But we thank thee that thou hast given unto us a clearer and fuller manifestation of thy wondrous goodness and love through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy well-beloved Son, who humbled himself, and dwelt among men in the form of a servant, and sacrificed himself in their service even unto death on the cross.

We bless thee, O God, for his unveiling of thy loving heart and self-giving life, and we pray that it may influence our minds and hearts so as to mold our lives into perfect accord with thy will, and bring us into sweeter fellowship with thee. May thy self-sacrificing love for us drive all selfishness from our hearts; lead us to look on the things of others, and lov-

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

ingly minister to them; cause us to live without murmurings and disputings; and make us blameless and harmless, the children of God without rebuke in this present world. May the spirit of the loving and self-sacrificing Christ be formed in us so that, when we pass from this life, we may be prepared to dwell with him in thy presence and drink "of the fountain of the water of life freely" forever. Amen.

XII. Phil. 3:7-14; Heb. 12:1-7.

O Lord of heaven and earth, we render thanks to thee for the love and care with which thou hast watched over us and supplied our manifold wants day after day, and we implore thy forgiveness for the forgetfulness of thee, and the many shortcomings and transgressions that have made us unworthy of thy kind regard and gracious bounty. And we pray, O Lord, that we may be enabled to utterly renounce every sinful desire, unrighteous purpose, and ungodly doing of our past lives, and henceforth strive more earnestly to live in harmony with thee. May we forget the things that are behind, save in so far as we can learn wisdom from them

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

and make them stepping-stones to better things, and, reaching forth unto the things which are before, press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. May we be willing to suffer the loss of all things that we may win Christ, and be made conformable to his death by having our spirits made one with the loving and self-giving spirit that led him to yield up his life on the cross.

And looking unto him, and considering how he endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, may we never become wearied and faint in our minds, but run with patience the race that is set before us. Graciously grant, O Lord, that, through every sorrow, every trial, and every hindrance, we may patiently press on unto the perfect day, and find at last the unspeakable blessedness that awaits those who overcome the world through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

XIII. Matt. 11: 28-30; 1 Pet. 2: 6-12, 21-25.

Most gracious Father, we are thy children. In thine infinite wisdom and love, thou hast brought us into being endowed with immortal spirits that can never be

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

at peace until they come into loving accord with thee. And we thank thee, our Father, that thou hast manifested thyself unto us in thy beloved Son, so that we may know thee, and come unto thee through him, and find rest unto our souls amid all the toils and cares and disappointments and sorrows of this present world.

And we pray, O Lord, that we may be enabled to come unto him truly and fully; that we may take his yoke upon us and learn of him who was meek and lowly in heart; that we may follow the steps of him who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; that, like him, we may revile not again when we are reviled, threaten not when we suffer, but commit our cause to thy righteous judgment; that we may come up to the full measure of the stature of manhood revealed by him who was one with thee; and that we may thus come into the spiritual oneness with thee and the unwavering trust in thee which will bring us into accord with the divine nature we have inherited from thee, deliver us from the condemnation of our own hearts, free us from all the tor-

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

menting cares and anxieties of life, and fill our souls with the peace that passeth thought and the divine joy that abideth forever. Amen.

XIV. Ps. 96; 97: 9-12.

Great art thou, O Lord, and greatly to be praised. Humbly we bow before thee, desiring to worship thee in the beauty of holiness and give unto thee the glory due unto thy name. With sincere and fervent gratitude we acknowledge thy goodness to us, manifested in an ever-renewed stream of blessings poured out upon us day after day.

And, as thy blessings are daily renewed unto us, we pray that our hearts may daily sing unto thee a new song—a song with still loftier strains of praise, still deeper and purer notes of gratitude, and still sweeter tones of love. May thy goodness and mercy to us lead us to hate evil, walk in the path of the just, which is as the shining light, and show forth thy salvation from day to day. May we ever hallow thy name in our hearts, lovingly and joyfully do thy will in all things, and so glorify thee in our lives that our

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

friends and associates will be influenced by our example to worship thee and consecrate their lives to thy righteous and peace-giving service, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

XV. Proverbs 3.

All-wise and ever-loving Lord, from whom all good cometh, teach us, we beseech thee, to apply our hearts unto wisdom—not unto the wisdom of the world, which counts material welfare and success the highest good, and not unto the wisdom of our own darkened understanding, which so often mistakes the false for the true and the wrong for the right, but unto the wisdom that is from above, which is “first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.” May our minds and hearts be fully possessed by this divine wisdom, which is more precious than rubies and more to be desired than all the riches and glories of the world, because “her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace.” Open thou, we beseech thee, the eyes of our understanding, so that we shall unerr-

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

ingly discern her ways; and grant that the spirit of truth and righteousness may ever abide within us and lead us to unfalteringly and unfailingly walk in her paths, be fruitful in every good work, increase in the knowledge and love of God, and find grace and peace and the joy of the upright in heart multiplied unto us henceforth and evermore. Amen.

XVI. Heb. 11:1-9, 23-27, 32-34.

O Lord, when we read of the faith and fidelity of thy servants in the olden time—of how, believing in thee as “a rewarder of them that diligently seek thee,” Abraham, in obedience to thy call, left his home and his country and “went out not knowing whither he went”; of how Moses “chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season”; and of how many heroic souls of the long ago through faith patiently endured sufferings, wrought righteousness, and subdued kingdoms—we feel ashamed of the weakness of our own faith and the littleness of our own work. We beseech thee, O Lord, to graciously forgive our distrust and unfaithfulness,

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

and help us to trust thee more fully, to commit ourselves wholly to thy guidance, and to bravely and cheerfully obey every divine call, even though it may be to the utmost self-denial, self-sacrifice, and suffering.

Lord, we believe; help thou our unbelief. Grant unto us a faith that will not doubt the wisdom and love of thy providence in the darkest hour of life; that will enable us to face all dangers fearlessly, to bear all burdens patiently, and to spend and be spent in thy service gladly; and that will so strengthen us that, "enduring as seeing the invisible," we shall overcome the world with all its temptations and be found at last among the blessed ones whose names will be confessed before his Father by our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

XVII. Psalm 42; Isa. 61:1-3, 10, 11; 1 John 3:1-3.

We thank thee, Father, for the blessing of hope that "springs eternal in the human breast" to comfort, encourage, and inspirit the soul when it is cast down and disquieted by the cares, disappoint-

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

ments, and sorrows of life, and call it from failure to renewed effort. And, above all other hopes that spring up in our hearts, we thank thee for the hope that is in thee—the hope that, “as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth,” thou “wilt cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations”; that thou wilt cause light to arise out of darkness, lead through every night of weeping to a morning of joy, and give unto thy children “beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.”

Everlastingly loving Father, we thank and adore thee that thou hast graciously conferred upon us the honor and dignity of sonship, and hast given unto us the inspiring hope that through all the trials of life thou art drawing us nearer to thyself, and that by and by we shall see thee as thou art and be like thee. Having this hope, may we purify ourselves even as thou art pure, and so prepare ourselves to dwell with thee in glory and enjoy the holy activities and pure pleasures of the

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

heavenly home and the blessed companionship of the redeemed forever. Amen.

XVIII. Psalm 91.

Merciful Giver and Sustainer of all life, we need thee every day and hour; for we are dependent upon thee even as new-born babes are dependent upon fatherly and motherly care. And we come to thee now with thankful hearts, rejoicing in the assurance that, notwithstanding our unworthiness—which we penitently confess and implore thee to forgive—we shall be watched over and cared for by thee with more than any earthly father's wisdom and more than any earthly mother's love.

We bless thee, our Father, that thou dost invite us to draw near unto thee, and abide under thy shadow, and find such shelter beneath thy protecting wings that we need not be afraid for the pestilence that walketh in darkness nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. We bless thee that thou dost give thine angels charge over thy children to keep them in all their ways, so that no real evil shall befall them, and that the seeming evils

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

that may come to them shall prove to be divine blessings.

Grant unto us thine enabling grace, our Father, that we may confide in thee more fully, walk humbly with thee day by day, dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and find rest in thee through all the trials of this present life; and when we pass hence into the life beyond, may we be welcomed by thee as thy children, brought back from all their wanderings to their Father, their home, and their eternal rest, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

XIX. Luke 14:7-11; John 13:4-17.

O Divine Love, ever brooding over the universe and bringing forth truth, beauty, and goodness, come into our hearts and abide in us, that we may be meek and lowly and loving like the blessed Christ who manifested thee in the flesh. Taught by him, may we not claim for ourselves the highest places and greatest honors, but contentedly serve thee in lowly ways until thou, in thine own good time, shalt call us up higher. May we have the genuine humility of Him who came not to

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

be ministered unto, but to minister, and who stooped even to the washing of the feet of his disciples in service. Help us to draw near unto thee, our Father, so that thy divine love may shine full upon us, and kindle in our hearts an answering love so deep and warm and strong that all self-exaltation—every selfish thought and desire—will be lost in it as a feebly glimmering star is lost in the splendor of the noonday sun.

Grant unto us, most merciful Father, such Christlike humbleness—such loss of self in love—as will deliver us from the bondage of selfish appetites and passions, free us from envy and jealousy and all that tendeth to strife, relieve our hearts from all wearing anxieties, banish from our minds all the blinding influences of pride, self-conceit, and self-interest, and exalt us by making us more like thee and better fitted to dwell in the brightness of thy glory and enjoy the delights of thy presence forever. Amen.

XX. Acts 17:22-31; John 14:1-10.

Lord of heaven and earth, maker of the world and all things therein, we thank

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

thee that, when men were ignorantly worshipping thee and gropingly seeking thee, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, revealed thee as an infinitely loving Father in whom dwells all that mind can ask, or heart desire, or imagination picture of “wonderful, or wise, or beautiful,” and with whom we may come into loving accord and have all our deathless longings satisfied and our souls filled with “peace as a river, and righteousness as the waves of the sea.”

Father of the Christ in whom thou didst incarnate thyself, and our Father, all our hope is in thee. Only as we live in obedience to thy holy will and come into spiritual oneness with thee can our troubled hearts become contented. It is not merely because we are weak and helpless that we need thee. Innumerable creatures in thy universe that are weaker than we are need thee far less than we do. Had we no spark of the divine within us, less than thy divine self might satisfy us; but since thou hast made us in thine own image and breathed into us some measure of thine own Divine Spirit, nothing less than thee, our divine Father, “sufficeth us.”

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

Help us, then, we entreat thee, to wean our desires and affections from the vain things of this present world, and become ever purer in heart and more godly in life until we shall be perfect even as thou art perfect, and find "peace upon peace, like wave on wave," in union with thee through Christ. Amen.

XXI. Ps. 31:19-24; Isa. 63:7-9; Eph.
2:1-7.

Lord God, maker of heaven and earth, thou art Love, and all thy works declare thy lovingkindness. All beautiful sights are thy goodness made visible, and all melodious sounds are thy benevolence made audible. Thy gracious Spirit is disclosed in all human virtue and loveliness, and in all the joy and gladness welling up in human hearts. Even in the dark and sorrowful events of human life, thy love is dominant; for as thy Spirit moved upon the face of the waters in the beginning, and brought light and life and order and beauty out of the dark and formless chaos, so thou hast moved through all the strife and suffering of our race, working out the "steady gain of man." But above all

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

other manifestations of thy goodness is the gift of thy Son, who came to dwell with us, and suffer with us, and become obedient unto death on the cross to reconcile us to thee. The love that thus stooped to bear our griefs, and carry our sorrows, and suffer death that we might have life, passeth thought.

We know, O Lord, that such love demands our most fervent gratitude, and the most self-sacrificing devotion in thy service; and when we think of how far short of this we have come—when we call to mind our indifference, ingratitude, selfishness, and sinfulness—we bow our heads in sorrow and shame. But we lift up our souls unto thee, the Father whose love never wearies, whose mercy endureth forever, and who with sublime patience and forbearance waits for our home-coming, and pray that thou wilt graciously forgive us, and help us to become more like thee, that we may be delivered from the condemnation of our hearts and have sweeter fellowship with thee.

Dear Lord, we long for thee. In thee alone can we find the deathless beauty, the quenchless glory, and the everlasting joy

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

which we sometimes glimpse in our brightest dreams. Our souls thirst for thee; and we pray that, even though it must be through the tortures of crucifixion, thou wilt make us wholly thine, so that "the melodies of the everlasting chime" will abide in our hearts through all the discords of this present world, and we shall be prepared to join the heavenly choir and harmoniously hymn thy praise in the world without end. Amen.

XXII. Rom. 5:1-11; Heb. 6:7-12.

Holy Father, whose chosen way of manifesting thyself to thy children is by the discipline of trial and pain, we rejoice that we can turn to thee in the midst of great anxiety, and commit all our troubles to thy sure help. As thou art with us in the sunlight, oh, be thou with us in the cloud. In the path by which thou guidest us, though it be through desert and stormy sea, suffer not our faith to fail, but sustain us by thy near presence, and let the comforts which are in Jesus Christ fill our hearts with peace. And, O God, grant that the fiery trial which trieth us may not be in vain, but may lead us to a

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

cheerful courage, and a holy patience; and let patience have her perfect work, that we may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing, wholly consecrate to thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.—*Henry W. Foote.*

XXIII. Rom. 12: 1-3, 9-21.

O Lord, give thy blessing, we pray thee, to our daily work, that we may do it in faith and heartily, as to the Lord and not unto men. All our powers of body and mind are thine, and we would fain devote them to thy service. Sanctify them, and the work in which they are engaged; let us not be slothful, but fervent in spirit; and do thou, O Lord, so bless our efforts that they may bring forth in us the fruits of true wisdom. Teach us to seek after truth and enable us to gain it; but grant that we may ever speak the truth in love; that, while we know earthly things, we may know thee, and be known by thee, through and in thy Son Jesus Christ. Give us this day thy Holy Spirit, that we may be thine in body and spirit in all our work and all our refreshments, through Jesus Christ

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

thy Son, our Lord. Amen.—*Thomas Arnold.*

XXIV. Col. 1:3-13, 19-27.

Almighty and most merciful Father, in whom we live and move and have our being, to whose tender compassion we owe our safety in days past, together with the hopes of that which is to come, we praise thee, O God, our Creator; unto thee do we give thanks, O God, our exceeding Joy, who daily pourest thy benefits upon us. Grant, we beseech thee, that Jesus our Lord, the Hope of glory, may be formed in us, in all humility, meekness, patience, contentedness, and absolute surrender of our souls and bodies to thy holy will and pleasure. Leave us not, nor forsake us, O Father, but conduct us safe through all changes of our condition here, in an unchangeable love to thee, and in holy tranquility of mind in thy love to us, till we come to dwell with thee, and rejoice in thee forever. Amen.—*Simon Patrick.*

XXV. Ps. 25:8-15; 36:5-10.

O God, by whom the meek are guided in judgment, and light riseth up in dark-

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

ness for the godly, grant us, in all our doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what thou wouldest have us to do; that the spirit of wisdom may save us from all false choices, and that in thy light we may see light, and in thy straight path may not stumble, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.—*William Bright.*

XXVI. 1 John 4:16-21; Phil. 1:9-11.

O God, perfect us in love, that we may conquer all selfishness and hatred of others; fill our hearts with thy joy, and shed abroad in them thy peace which passeth understanding; that so those murmurings and disputings to which we are too prone may be overcome. Make us longsuffering and gentle, and thus subdue our hastiness and angry tempers, and grant that we may bring forth the blessed fruits of the Spirit, to thy praise and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.—*Henry Alford.*

XXVII. John 17:1-8; Jude, vs. 17-21.

Lord, give us hearts never to forget thy love; but to dwell therein whatever we do, whether we sleep or wake, live or

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

die, or rise again to the life that is to come. For thy love is eternal life and everlasting rest; for this is life eternal—to know thee and thine infinite goodness. Oh, let its flame never be quenched in our hearts; let it grow and brighten, till our whole souls are glowing and shining with its light and warmth. Be thou our Joy and Hope, our Strength and Life, our Shield and Shepherd, our Portion forever. For happy are we if we continue in the love wherewith thou hast loved us; holy are we when we love thee steadfastly. Therefore, O thou whose name and essence is Love, enkindle our hearts, enlighten our understandings, sanctify our wills, and fill all the thoughts of our hearts, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.—*Johann Arndt.*

XXVIII. John 13: 34, 35; 1 John 2: 8-11; 3: 14-17.

O God of love, who hast given a new commandment, through thine only begotten Son, that we should love one another, even as thou didst love us, the unworthy and the wandering, and gavest thy beloved Son for our life and salvation; we

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

pray thee, Lord, give to us, thy servants, in all time of our life on the earth, a mind forgetful of past ill will, a pure conscience and sincere thoughts, and a heart to love our brethren. Amen.—*Coptic Liturgy of St. Cyril.*

XXIX. Deut. 10:12-21; Matt. 22:34-40.

O Lord, grant to us so to love thee with all our heart, with all our mind, and all our soul, and our neighbor for thy sake, that the grace of charity and brotherly love may dwell in us, and all envy, harshness, and ill will may die in us; and fill our hearts with feelings of love, kindness, and compassion, so that, by constantly rejoicing in the happiness and good success of others, by sympathizing with them in their sorrows, and putting away all harsh judgments and envious thoughts, we may follow thee, who art thyself the true and perfect Love. Amen.—*Treasury of Devotion.*

XXX. John 1:1-14; 8:12-16.

Our Father, unto thee, in the light of our Saviour's blessed life, we would lift up our souls. We thank thee for that true

THE FAMILY WORSHIP

Light shining in our world with still increasing brightness. We thank thee for all who have walked therein, and especially for those near to us and dear, in whose lives we have seen this excellent glory and beauty. May we know that in the body and out of the body they are with thee, and that when these earthly days come to an end, it is not that our service of thee and of one another may cease, but that it may begin anew. Make us glad in all who have faithfully lived; make us glad in all who have peacefully died. Lift us into light and love and purity and blessedness, and give us at last our portion with those who have trusted in thee and sought, in small things as in great, in things temporal and things eternal, to do thy holy will. Amen.—*Rufus Ellis*.

XXXI. Ps. 84:11, 12; Isa. 60:18-20; Rev. 21:23-27.

O Thou who art the true sun of the world, evermore rising, and never going down; who, by thy most wholesome appearing and sight, dost nourish and make joyful all things, as well that are in heaven, as also that are on earth—we

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

beseech thee mercifully and favorably to shine into our hearts, that the night and darkness of sin, and the mists of error on every side, being driven away, thou brightly shining within our hearts, we may all our life long go without any stumbling or offense, and walk as in the daytime, being pure and clean from the works of darkness, and abounding in all good works which thou hast prepared for us to walk in. Amen.—*Erasmus*.

VIII

THE GOLDEN THREAD

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR A YEAR.

Indebtedness to Dr. B. A. Abbott for the following Bible readings is gratefully acknowledged. They were arranged by him for the Bible Readers' League of his congregation, and he has kindly permitted the use of them in this book.

JANUARY.

January 1.—God Made the World (Gen. 1:1-25). Through Christ (Col. 1:14-17).

January 2.—The Origin, Nature, and Destiny of Man (Gen. 1:26 to 2:3; 1 John 3:1-3).

January 3.—Man's First Home—God's Purpose Toward Man (Gen. 2:7-25; John 14:1-3).

January 4.—Man's Fall and Rise Again (Gen. 3:17-24; Rom. 3:21-29).

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

January 5.—What Were the Sin and Punishment of Cain? (Gen. 4: 3-15; 1 John 3: 10-12).

January 6.—The Condition that Invites Destruction, and the Way Out (Gen. 6: 1-13; 1 Pet. 3: 18-22).

January 7.—The Heart of God (Gen. 8: 1-22; 1 Tim. 2: 3-6).

January 8.—God's Covenant with Noah and Us (Gen. 9: 8-17; Rev. 4: 1-4).

January 9.—Babel and Pentecost. Why? (Gen. 11: 1-9; Acts 2: 1-11).

January 10.—Abraham's Call. Why? (Gen. 12: 1-9; Heb. 11: 8-10).

January 11.—The Unselfishness of Abraham. Did It Pay? (Gen. 13; Matt. 5: 9).

January 12.—Abraham's Intercessory Prayer (Gen. 18: 22-33; Acts 12: 5; Jas. 5: 16).

January 13.—Did Lot's Choice Pay? (Gen. 19: 12-29; 2 Pet. 2: 6-9).

January 14.—The Comforting God (Gen. 21: 8-21; 2 Cor. 1: 3).

January 15.—What Did God Mean? (Gen. 22: 1-19; Rom. 8: 32).

January 16.—Lights and Shadows of Isaac's Life (Gen. 26: 12-25; Matt. 5: 5).

THE GOLDEN THREAD

January 17.—The Ladder of Life (Gen. 28:10-22; John 1:51).

January 18.—Jacob Meeting Effects of His Past (Gen. 32:1-11; Matt. 5:21-26).

January 19.—Facing a Great Crisis (Gen. 32:13-32; 2 Tim. 4:6-8).

January 20.—Reconciliation After Twenty Years' Estrangement (Gen. 33; Matt. 6:14, 15).

January 21.—Joseph the Beloved (Gen. 37:1-11; Col. 3:20, 21).

January 22.—Joseph the Hated (Gen. 37:12-28; 1 John 2:10, 11).

January 23.—The Grief of a Father (Gen. 37:29-36; 2 Tim. 3:1-5).

January 24.—The Nobility of Joseph (Gen. 39; Phil. 4:8).

January 25.—Forgotten in Prison (Gen. 40; Heb. 13:3).

January 26.—Joseph Delivered and Exalted (Gen. 41:1-15, 25-45; Rom. 8:28).

January 27.—Joseph, the Savior of Egypt (Gen. 41:46-57; Rom. 13:1-4).

January 28.—Joseph's Brethren Unexpectedly Come: Uncomfortable Memories (Gen. 42:1-24; Rom. 12:19-21).

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

January 29.—A Noble Revenge and the Shadow of a Great Wrong (Gen. 42:25-38; 1 Pet. 2:8-12).

January 30.—Joseph Receives His Brethren the Second Time (Gen. 43; Luke 6:27, 28).

January 31.—Benjamin's Arrest and Judah's Plea (Gen. 44; Philem. vs. 8-20).

FEBRUARY.

February 1.—Joseph Made Known to His Brethren (Gen. 45:1-20, 25-28).

February 2.—Joseph's Father Goes to Egypt (Gen. 46:1-6, 28-34).

February 3.—Joseph Provides for His Father (Gen. 47:1-12; 1 Tim. 5:8).

February 4.—The Sickness of Jacob: Memory, Love, Grief, Hope (Gen. 48:1-22; 2 Cor. 12:8-10).

February 5.—“Sunset and Evening Star” (Gen. 49; 50:1; Heb. 11:39, 40).

February 6.—The Meaning of Dark Experiences (Gen. 50:20; Rom. 8:28).

February 7.—The Birth and Training of Moses (Ex. 2; Matt. 2:13-15).

February 8.—The Call of Moses (Ex. 3:1-14; Heb. 11:23-29).

THE GOLDEN THREAD

February 9.—The Preparation of Moses (Ex. 4:1-17; Matt. 10:32, 33).

February 10.—Pharaoh's Treatment of the Israelites (Ex. 5:1-23; Jas. 5:1-6).

February 11.—The Deliverance of the Israelites (Ex. 12:29-51; 1 Cor. 5:7, 8).

February 12.—Divine Guidance and Care (Ex. 13:17-22; 14:13-15, 21-30; 1 Cor. 10:7).

February 13.—The Song of Moses (Ex. 13:1-21; Rev. 15:3, 4).

February 14.—God Appears to Moses and the Israelites at Sinai (Ex. 19; Heb. 12:18-24).

February 15.—God Gives the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:1-21; Rom. 13:10).

February 16.—Fickleness of the Israelites (Ex. 32:15-35; Heb. 3:7-11).

February 17.—The Tent of Meeting and the Glory of God (Ex. 33:7-23; John 14:23, 24).

February 18.—The Revelation of the Glory of God (Ex. 34:1-9; 2 Cor. 4:5, 6).

February 19.—Willing Offerings and Inspired Workers (Ex. 35:20-35; 2 Cor. 9:6-9).

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

February 20.—The Religious Value of “The Tent of Meeting” (Ex. 40:17-38; Matt. 18:18-20).

February 21.—The Fatal Offering of Strange Fire (Lev. 10:1-11; Heb. 8:4, 5).

February 22.—“If a Brother Be Waxed Poor” (Lev. 25:35-46; Luke 3:11).

February 23.—The Blessings of Obedience (Lev. 26:1-13; Matt. 7:24-27).

February 24.—Evils of Disobedience (Lev. 26:14-29; Col. 3:5-7).

February 25.—“If Then Their Uncircumcised Heart Be Humbled” (Lev. 26:40-46; 1 John 1:5 to 2:2).

February 26.—The March from Sinai (Num. 10:11-13, 29-36; Acts 2:43-47).

February 27.—The Trials of Leaders (Num. 11:1-15, 31-35; 1 Cor. 10:10).

February 28.—Evils of Prejudice and the Greatness of Love (Num. 12; 1 Cor. 13:1-5).

February 29.—The Spies and Their Report (Num. 13:17-33; Rev. 21:7, 8).

MARCH.

March 1.—An Intercessory Prayer of Moses (Num. 14:1-25; 1 John 5:14-17).

THE GOLDEN THREAD

March 2.—Murmuring in the Sight of God (Num. 14:26-38; Phil. 4:11-13).

March 3.—Evils of Rashness (Num. 14:39-45; Jas. 3:16-18).

March 4.—Errors, Unwitting Sinning, and High-handed Sins (Num. 15:22-31; Rom. 6:1-7).

March 5.—“These Are the Waters of Meribah” (Num. 20:1-13; 2 Cor. 4:16-18).

March 6.—The Danger and Sin of Discouragement (Num. 21:4-9; Acts 13:13).

March 7.—As It Is in Life—Journeying, Singing, Fighting (Num. 21:10-31; Phil. 4:4-7).

March 8.—A Prophet’s Temptation and Fall (Num. 22:1-20; Luke 12:15; Acts 20:33).

March 9.—A Prophet’s Fatal Perversity (Num. 22:24-41; Acts 26:19).

March 10.—A Prophet’s Recovery and Prophecies (Num. 23; Rev. 22:17).

March 11.—Third and Fourth Prophecies of the Recovered Prophet (Num. 24; Acts 20:26, 27).

March 12.—Satisfied with Less than the Best (Num. 32:6-27; Matt. 7:13, 14).

March 13.—Cities of Refuge (Num. 35:9-34; Acts 2:38).

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

March 14.—A Speech of Moses at Sinai (Deut. 1:5-18; Jas. 1:22-25).

March 15.—Conserving and Transmitting God's Law (Deut. 4:1-14; 2 Pet. 1:14-16).

March 16.—The Wonders of Revelation (Deut. 4:32-40; Rev. 1:12-19).

March 17.—The Yearning of God over His People (Deut. 5:22-33; John 3:16).

March 18.—“Then Beware Lest Thou Forget Jehovah” (Deut. 6; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

March 19.—The Duty of Those upon Whom God Sets His Love (Deut. 7:6-16; Matt. 10:8).

March 20.—The Background of Courage (Deut. 7:17-26; 1 Cor. 1:26-29).

March 21.—“If There Be Poor with Thee” (Deut. 15:1-11; Jas. 2:1-6).

March 22.—The Uncompromised Life and the Promised Prophet (Deut. 18:9-20; Acts 3:22-26).

March 23.—“Life and Good, and Death and Evil” (Deut. 30:11-20; Rom. 6:23).

March 24.—Moses Selects His Successor (Deut. 31:1-13; Luke 6:13-19).

March 25.—God's Charge to Joshua (Deut. 31:14-30; Matt. 10:5-10).

THE GOLDEN THREAD

March 26.—The Song Moses Taught Israel (Deut. 32:1-20; Col. 3:16).

March 27.—The Song Moses Taught Israel (continued) (Deut. 32:21-43).

March 28.—The Last Charge of Moses (Deut. 32:44-52; 2 Tim. 4:1-5).

March 29.—The Benediction of Moses (Deut. 33:1-16; Acts 20:36-38).

March 30.—The Benediction of Moses (continued) (Deut. 33:17-29; Luke 24:50-52).

March 31.—The Death of Moses (Deut. 34; Jude v. 9; Luke 9:30, 31).

APRIL.

April 1.—Men God Calls to Lead (Josh. 1:1-9; 1 Cor. 16:13).

April 2.—“Jehovah Will Do Wonders Amongst You” (Josh. 3:5-17; John 14:12-14).

April 3.—What Weakens Causes and Character (Josh. 7:8-26; Luke 12:15).

April 4.—The Victories of Joshua (Josh. 11:15-23; Eph. 6:10-18).

April 5.—The Meaning and Conditions of God's Blessings (Josh. 23; Matt. 7:24-27).

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

April 6.—Farewell Address of Joshua and the Choice of the People (Josh. 24: 1-18; Matt. 10: 34-39).

April 7.—Perverseness and God's Discipline and Guide (Judg. 2: 11-23; Matt. 10: 11-15).

April 8.—Not Numbers, but Faith, Effective (Judg. 7: 1-8; Matt. 18: 18-20).

April 9.—God and a Man Invincible (Judg. 7: 9-23; 2 Tim. 4: 16-18).

April 10.—The Consolations of Friendship (Ruth 1; John 15: 11-15).

April 11.—The Right Ambition for Children (1 Sam. 1: 21-27; Mark 10: 13-16).

April 12.—The Vision of Samuel (1 Sam. 3: 1-18; Col. 3: 25).

April 13.—The Cost of False Living (1 Sam. 4: 5-18; Luke 13: 1-5).

April 14.—The Life and Work of Samuel (1 Sam. 7; Luke 19: 16-18).

April 15.—A Great Opportunity (1 Sam. 10: 9-27; Luke 14: 10, 11).

April 16.—An Ideal Judge (1 Sam. 12: 1-5, 19-25; Col. 1: 9-12).

April 17.—Saul's Failure as King (1 Sam. 15: 22-31; Matt. 7: 21-23).

THE GOLDEN THREAD

April 18.—The Discovery of Saul's Successor (1 Sam. 16:1-13; 1 Cor. 1:26-30).

April 19.—The Power of Faith and Courage (1 Sam. 17:31-50; Acts 5:25-29).

April 20.—The Evils of Jealousy (1 Sam. 18:1-16; Luke 15:25-32).

April 21.—A Great Friendship (1 Sam. 20:17-42; Rev. 2:17).

April 22.—How to Treat an Enemy (1 Sam. 24; Rom. 12:19-21).

April 23.—The Death of Saul (1 Sam. 31; Acts 1:18-20).

April 24.—The Sacredness of Life (2 Sam. 1:1-16; John 19:31-34).

April 25.—David's Elegy (2 Sam. 1:17-27). Contrast Rev. 14:13.

April 26.—The Presence that Blesses (2 Sam. 6:1-15; 1 Cor. 10:16, 17).

April 27.—The Good Thoughts We Can Never Carry Out (2 Sam. 7:1-17; 1 Kings 8:17-19; Rom. 15:28, 29).

April 28.—David's Darkest Hour (2 Sam. 12:1-10; Heb. 7:25).

April 29.—Bereavement and Its Mitigations (2 Sam. 12:15-23; 1 Thess. 4:13-17).

April 30.—Ambitions that Destroy (2 Sam. 15:1-12; 18:14-18; Luke 14:11).

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

MAY.

May 1.—Who Can Make the Deepest Wounds? (2 Sam. 18:19-33; Luke 22:54-62).

May 2.—Life and God (2 Sam. 22:1-33; Luke 12:19-21).

May 3.—Swan Songs of Great Souls (2 Sam. 23:1-7; 2 Tim. 4:6-8).

May 4.—A Dream of Life (1 Kings 3:4-15; Matt. 6:31-34).

May 5.—Solomon's Prayer (1 Kings 8:22-53; John 15:7).

May 6.—Conditions of Perpetual Peace and Prosperity (2 Chron. 7:11-22; 1 Pet. 3:8-12).

May 7.—The Glory of Solomon and True Glory (1 Kings 10:1-29; Matt. 6:28, 29).

May 8.—What Ruins Men and Rulers (1 Kings 12:1-15; 3 John vs. 9-11).

May 9.—The True Sources of Life (1 Kings 17:1-16; John 4:10-15).

May 10.—Selecting a God (1 Kings 18:20-40; Acts 17:22-28).

May 11.—Despondency: Its Causes and Its Cure (1 Kings 19:1-16; Acts 27:20-26).

THE GOLDEN THREAD

May 12.—“Take Heed, and Beware of Covetousness” (1 Kings 21:1-16; 1 Tim. 6:6-10).

May 13.—The Translation of Elijah—the Call of Elisha (2 Kings 2:1-14; Heb. 11:5).

May 14.—Need, Pride, Humility, Obedience, Healing, Vision (2 Kings 5:1-15; Acts 9:17-19).

May 15.—Our Unseen Helpers (2 Kings 6:8-23; Acts 7:55, 56).

May 16.—The Need for Intensity (2 Kings 13:14-20; Heb. 12:1-5).

May 17.—How Long Will You Live? (2 Kings 20; Luke 13:6-9).

May 18.—The Babylonian Captivity and Its Lessons (2 Kings 24:10-20; Acts 3:19-21).

May 19.—A Great Ruler and His Function (2 Chron. 26:1-15; Rom. 15:3).

May 20.—A Great Ruler’s Fatal Mistake (2 Chron. 26:16-23; Heb. 12:28, 29).

May 21.—Avoiding Compromises (Ezra 4:1-6; 2 Cor. 6:14-18).

May 22.—Daring to Live Up to One’s Faith (Ezra 8:15-31; Acts 21:10-14).

May 23.—The Spirit that Overcomes Difficulties (Neh. 4:6-23; 1 John 5:4, 5).

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

May 24.—“Should Such a Man as I Flee?” The Glory of Courage (Neh. 6; Matt. 10:27-33).

May 25.—“The Gracious and Merciful, the Great, the Mighty, the Terrible God” (Neh. 9:30-38; Eph. 1:3, 4).

May 26.—A Great Risk for a Great Cause (Esth. 4; Rom. 16:3, 4).

May 27.—The Strength of a Good Man (Job 1; 1 Pet. 5:12-19).

May 28.—The Patience of a Good Man (Job 2; Jas. 5:7-11).

May 29.—Man’s Greatest Battle (Job 7; Rom. 7:21-25).

May 30.—The Righteous Man Has No Fear of God (Job 13:1-19; Rev. 22:3-5).

May 31.—The View of Life Before Christ, and Since (Job 14; Phil. 1:21-26).

JUNE.

June 1.—The Happy Life (Ps. 1; Matt. 5:3-12).

June 2.—Begin and End the Day with God (Ps. 3 and 4; Mark 1:32-35).

June 3.—A Song for the Troubled (Ps. 6; John 14:1-3).

June 4.—The Glory of God and the Greatness of Man (Ps. 8; Rev. 22:8, 9).

THE GOLDEN THREAD

June 5.—Foundations that Can Not Be Removed (Ps. 11; 1 Cor. 3:10-15).

June 6.—The Psalm of the Good Citizen (Ps. 15; 1 Pet. 2:13-17).

June 7.—The Path of Life and the Guide to the Way (Ps. 16; John 14:3-6).

June 8.—A Song of Recompenses (Ps. 18:19-36; Mark 10:29-31).

June 9.—God in Nature and in the Soul (Ps. 19; Col. 1:26-29).

June 10.—The Psalm of Beautiful Prayers (Ps. 20; 2 Thess. 1:11).

June 11.—David's Psalm of Life and Ours (Ps. 23; John 10:11).

June 12.—A Psalm for the Timid and Lonely (Ps. 27; Matt. 28:16-20).

June 13.—The Song of the Penitent Heart (Ps. 32; Matt. 1:21).

June 14.—A Psalm for the Fretting (Ps. 37; Luke 10:41, 42).

June 15.—The Song of the Shut-in (Ps. 42; 1 Pet. 5:6, 7).

June 16.—The Battle-hymn of the Reformation (Ps. 46; Acts 4:23-31).

June 17.—A Psalm for the Penitent Sinner, Conscience-stricken and Broken in Spirit (Ps. 51; Heb. 12:11-13).

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

June 18.—The Blight of the Withered Heart (Ps. 14 and 53; Rom. 10:9, 10).

June 19.—“Make His Praise Glorious” (Ps. 66; Rev. 5:11-14).

June 20.—The Ideal Ruler (Ps. 72; John 3:1, 2).

June 21.—The Goodness of God and the Inequalities of Life (Ps. 73; 1 Pet. 4:12-14).

June 22.—The Delights of God’s House (Ps. 84; Mark 11:15-18).

June 23.—Moses’ Psalm of Life (Ps. 90; Heb. 13:8).

June 24.—“The Secret of the Most High” (Ps. 91; Rev. 2:17).

June 25.—Who Is God? (Ps. 103; Matt. 22:32).

June 26.—The Law of God (Ps. 119:97-112—read the whole Psalm; Matt. 24:35).

June 27.—The Traveler’s Psalm (Ps. 121; Heb. 12:1, 2).

June 28.—Tears and Joy (Ps. 126; Gal. 6:9).

June 29.—“Out of the Depths” (Ps. 130; Acts 2:37, 38).

June 30.—Where Is God? (Ps. 139; Acts 17:27, 28).

THE GOLDEN THREAD

JULY.

July 1.—God, Father, Mother (Prov. 1:7-10; Eph. 6:1-4)..

July 2.—The Principal Thing (Prov. 4:5-9; 1 Cor. 1:30, 31).

July 3.—“A Soft Answer” (Prov. 15:1-4; Jas. 1:26, 27).

July 4.—The Best Wealth (Prov. 22:1-4; Luke 12:21).

July 5.—One of Earth’s Greatest Woes (Prov. 23:29-35; 1 Cor. 6:10).

July 6.—The Most Valuable Man (Eccl. 9:13-18; Matt. 10:29-31).

July 7.—The Greatest Opportunity of Youth (Eccl. 12:1-7; Matt. 19:16-22).

July 8.—True Worship and Religion (Isa. 1:12-17; Jas. 1:27).

July 9.—A Vision of God’s Universal Reign (Isa. 2; Matt. 28:18-20; Rev. 21).

July 10.—Cost of the Ignorance of God’s Will (Isa. 5:13-17; John 17:3).

July 11.—The Vision of God (Isa. 6; Matt. 5:8; 1 John 3:2).

July 12.—The Curse of Superstition (Isa. 8:19-22; Eph. 5:11, 12).

July 13.—The Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6, 7; Luke 2:14).

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

July 14.—The Land of No Hurts (Isa. 11:6-10; Mark 1:14, 15).

July 15.—The Manly Man (Isa. 32:1-8; Philem. vs. 18-20).

July 16.—“Sorrow and Sighing Shall Flee Away” (Isa. 35:5-10; Rev. 21:3-5).

July 17.—Thoughts of the Sick (Isa. 38:9-20; Jas. 5:13-16).

July 18.—The Comfort of God (Isa. 40:1-11; Matt. 11:28-30).

July 19.—The Greatness of God (Isa. 40:18-26; Rev. 4).

July 20.—“He Increaseth Strength” (Isa. 40:27-30; 2 Cor. 12:9, 10).

July 21.—The Love of God (Isa. 43:1-7; John 3:16).

July 22.—The Preacher of the Gospel (Isa. 52:7-10; Rom. 10:12-15).

July 23.—The Sorrows of the “Man of Sorrows” (Isa. 53:3-9; Matt. 27:27-31).

July 24.—A Thornless World (Isa. 55:10-13; Rev. 22:3, 4).

July 25.—The Expression of the Spirit of the Lord (Isa. 61:1-3; Luke 4:16-22).

July 26.—The Joy in God (Isa. 61:10, 11; Matt. 25:22, 23).

THE GOLDEN THREAD

July 27.—Our Helper (Isa. 63:1-6; Heb. 4:14-16).

July 28.—The Lovingkindness of Jehovah (Isa. 63:7-9; John 3:16).

July 29.—The Fatherhood of God (Isa. 63:15-19; 64:8-12; Matt. 6:32).

July 30.—“God a Consuming Fire” (Isa. 64:1-7; Heb. 12:28, 29).

July 31.—The Glory of God for All Nations (Isa. 66:18-21; Rev. 15:3, 4).

AUGUST.

August 1.—Searching for a Man (Jer. 5:1-6; Matt. 5:13-16).

August 2.—A Wonderful and Horrible Thing (Jer. 5:30, 31; Gal. 1:6-10).

August 3.—The Old Paths (Jer. 6:16-19; Acts 4:12).

August 4.—Neglected Opportunities (Jer. 8:18-22; Matt. 25:1-13).

August 5.—Society without Religion (Jer. 9:1-5; Jude vs. 10-13).

August 6.—The Human Heart and Its Need (Jer. 17:9-11; Acts 8:21-24).

August 7.—Broken Lives Made Over (Jer. 18:1-4; Gal. 6:1-5).

August 8.—How to Know and Possess God (Jer. 24:6, 7; John 14:8, 9).

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

August 9.—Punishment and Correction (Jer. 30:10, 11; Heb. 12:5-11).

August 10.—The New Covenant (Jer. 31:29-34; Heb. 8:7-12).

August 11.—Principles that Make Permanent (Jer. 35:12-19; Matt. 7:24-27).

August 12.—Futility and Sin of Trying to Destroy God's Word (Jer. 36:27-32; Matt. 24:35).

August 13.—Promises Made in Extremity (Jer. 42:1-6; John 7:16, 17).

August 14.—The Treatment of Promises Made in Extremity (Jer. 42:7-22; John 14:23).

August 15.—Result of Resistance to God (Jer. 48:42-44; Acts 5:34-39).

August 16.—Faces Toward the Light (Jer. 50:4, 5; Acts 2:25-28).

August 17.—"Israel Is Not Forsaken" (Jer. 51:5-10; Matt. 27:37-44).

August 18.—The Duty of Caring (Lam. 1:12-16; Rom. 12:15).

August 19.—New Mercies Daily (Lam. 3:22-27; Luke 11:3).

August 20.—Incredible Things (Lam. 4:12, 13; Mark 13:1, 2).

August 21.—Visions and Environment (Ezek. 1:1-3; Rev. 1:9-11).

THE GOLDEN THREAD

August 22.—Self-respect the Condition of Inspiration (Ezek. 2; Rev. 1:17-20; 22:8, 9).

August 23.—Delivering Others Delivers One's Own Soul (Ezek. 4:16-21; 1 Tim. 4:16).

August 24.—The Presence that Is a Sanctuary (Ezek. 11:16, 17; Rev. 21:23).

August 25.—The Meaning of the Captivity (Ezek. 17:11-24; Col. 3:25).

August 26.—Personal Responsibility (Ezek. 18:1-3, 19-24; Gal. 6:4, 5).

August 27.—The Fairness of God (Ezek. 18:25-32; Matt. 20:13-16).

August 28.—Life's Hidden Sorrows (Ezek. 24:15-18; 2 Cor. 12:7-9).

August 29.—Man Not Saved by His Own Righteousness (Ezek. 33:10-16; Eph. 2:8-10).

August 30.—Resurrection by Regeneration (Ezek. 37:1-14; John 5:24-27).

August 31.—Punishment for a Little While, Love Forevermore (Ezek. 39:21, 29; Heb. 12:7-13).

SEPTEMBER.

September 1.—Results of Loyalty to Conviction (Dan. 1:8-20; Matt. 10:32, 33).

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

September 2.—Kingdom of Heaven (Dan. 2:44, 45; Rev. 11:15-19).

September 3.—The Punishment of Vanity (Dan. 4:30-37; Rom. 12:3).

September 4.—Weighed and Wanting (Dan. 5:22-30; Matt. 5:20).

September 5.—The Splendors of the Righteous (Dan. 12:1-4; Matt. 13:41-43; 2 Cor. 4:6).

September 6.—A Fatal Lack (Hos. 4:6-9; Rom. 1:28).

September 7.—Morning Faces (Hos. 6:1-3; Acts 6:15; 2 Cor. 3:7).

September 8.—Short-lived Goodness (Hos. 6:4-6; Matt. 13:20, 21).

September 9.—Freshness of the Spiritual Life (Hos. 14:4-9; Acts 3:19-21).

September 10.—The Larger Forgiveness (Joel 2:21-27; Luke 15:20-24).

September 11.—The Universal Inspiration (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:1-4, 16).

September 12.—Acceptable and Non-acceptable Worship (Amos 5:21-27; John 4:23, 24).

September 13.—The Great Sin of Unbrotherliness (Obad. vs. 10-14; 1 John 3:17).

THE GOLDEN THREAD

September 14.—Running Away from Duty is Running into Trouble (Jonah 1: 1-17; Luke 12: 47, 48).

September 15.—The Power of Preaching (Jonah 3; 1 Cor. 1: 21).

September 16.—The Hardness of Men and the Tenderness of God (Jonah 4; Luke 15: 28-32).

September 17.—A Vision of Peace and Security (Mic. 4: 2-5; Rev. 21: 23-27).

September 18.—A Prophecy and Its Fulfillment (Mic. 4: 1, 2; Matt. 2: 1-6).

September 19.—What God Requires (Mic. 6: 6-8; Matt. 25: 34-40).

September 20.—The God with Whom We Have to Do (Nah. 1: 3-10; John 4: 16).

September 21.—“Woe unto Him” (Hab. 2: 12-17; Matt. 23: 13-39).

September 22.—Faith Triumphant (Hab. 3: 17-19; Acts 20: 22-24).

September 23.—Evils of Disbelieving that God Has Part in Human Affairs (Zeph. 1: 8-13; Matt. 27: 42-44).

September 24.—There Is a Glory that Always Grows Greater (Hag. 2: 3-9; 1 John 3: 1-3).

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

September 25.—Good Words and Comfortable Words (Zech. 1:12-17; Luke 7:47-50).

September 26.—The Greatness of the Day of Small Things (Zech. 4:6-10; Luke 12:32).

September 27.—“The City of Truth” (Zech. 8:3-8; Rev. 21:27).

September 28.—The Attractiveness of True Spirituality (Zech. 8:18-23; Matt. 5:16).

September 29.—“Who Can Abide the Day of His Coming?” (Mal. 3:1-6; Matt. 3:7-10).

September 30.—God’s Jewels (Mal. 3:16-18; Heb. 10:22-25).

OCTOBER.

October 1.—The Foundation of the Gospels (Luke 1:1-4; John 21:24, 25; 2 Pet. 1:16).

October 2.—Christ Before the World Was (John 1:1-14).

October 3.—The Birth of Christ (Luke 2:1-7).

October 4.—The Vision of the Shepherds and the Song of Peace and Good Will (Luke 2:8-20).

THE GOLDEN THREAD

October 5.—The Adoration in the Temple (Luke 2:21-39).

October 6.—The Coming of the Wise Men (Matt. 2:1-12).

October 7.—The Flight into Egypt (Matt. 2:13-23).

October 8.—“Thus It Becometh Us to Fulfill All Righteousness” (Matt. 3:13-17).

October 9.—“Tempted in All Points Like as We Are” (Matt. 4:1-11).

October 10.—Speak to the Man Next . . . (John 1:35-51).

October 11.—Jesus and the Joys of Life (John 2:1-12).

October 12.—The Sin of Commercializing Worship (John 2:13-25).

October 13.—The Christian Life a New Life (John 3:1-7).

October 14.—The Power that Creates the New Life (John 3:8-21).

October 15.—The Worship Which is Acceptable to God (John 4:19-26).

October 16.—The Program of Jesus (Luke 4:16-22).

October 17.—The Purifying Presence and the Abundant Blessing that Follows (Luke 5:1-9).

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

October 18.—A Great Call and a Prompt Response (Mark 1:16-20).

October 19.—The Prelude to a Successful Day (Mark 1:35-39).

October 20.—Christian Life the Life Beatific (Matt. 5:1-12).

October 21.—The Light the Christian Sheds (Matt. 5:13-16).

October 22.—The Righteousness Christ Demands (Matt. 5:17-42).

October 23.—The Love that Perfects Life (Matt. 5:43-48).

October 24.—The True Motive of Religion (Matt. 6:1-18).

October 25.—The Life of Trust (Matt. 6:19-34).

October 26.—Practicing the Golden Rule (Matt. 7:1-12).

October 27.—The Necessity of Sincere Obedience (Matt. 7:13-27).

October 28.—Not Ashamed of Christ (Mark 2:13-17).

October 29.—The Spirit of the Sabbath (the right use of the Lord's Day) (Matt. 12:1-8).

October 30.—Christ's Compassion Shown in His Treatment of "a Broken Reed" (Luke 7:36-50).

THE GOLDEN THREAD

October 31.—The Rest We Find in Christ (Matt. 11:25-30).

NOVEMBER.

November 1.—Hindrances in the Heart (Matt. 13:1-9, 19-23).

November 2.—Transfigured — H o w ? Why? (Mark 9:2-13).

November 3.—Christ's Thought of Children (Matt. 18:1-14).

November 4.—The Gloom of Worldliness (Mark 10:17-31).

November 5.—The Beauty of Neighborliness (Luke 10:25-37).

November 6.—The Cure for Drudgery (Luke 10:38-42).

November 7.—“So Is He that . . . Is Not Rich Toward God” (Luke 12:13-21).

November 8.—Opportunity, Responsibility, Consequences (Luke 16:19-31).

November 9.—“Watch, Therefore” (Matt. 25:1-13).

November 10.—What Will Count in the Judgment (Matt. 25:31-46; 2 Cor. 5:10).

November 11.—The Lord's Supper the Love Ordinance (Luke 22:14-23).

November 12.—Death and the Great Beyond (John 14:1-7).

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

November 13.—“The Rose Garden of God” (Matt. 26:36-46).

November 14.—The Crucifixion (Mark 15:21-41).

November 15.—The Resurrection (Matt. 28:1-10).

November 16.—An Outline of the Church’s Duty (Matt. 28:16-20).

November 17.—The Program of the Risen Christ and Its Consummation (Acts 1:1-11).

November 18.—Power from on High the Equipment of the Christian (Acts 2:1-13).

November 19.—A Picture of an Apostolic Church (Acts 2:36-47).

November 20.—Moral Effects of Communion with Christ (Acts 4:13-20).

November 21.—Evils of Imperfect Consecration (Acts 5:1-11).

November 22.—The First Christian Martyr (Acts 7:54-60).

November 23.—The Conversion of Saul (Acts 9:1-9).

November 24.—A Vision of Christian Democracy (Acts 10:9-16, 24-34).

November 25.—Songs in the Night (Acts 16:19-34).

THE GOLDEN THREAD

November 26.—A Sermon to Philosophers on God (Acts 17:23-31).

November 27.—The Power by Which God Will Cleanse the World (Rom. 1:13-17).

November 28.—The Love that Will Not Let Me Go (Rom. 8:26-39).

November 29.—The Ethics of the Christian Life (Rom. 12).

November 30.—The Greatest Thing in the World (1 Cor. 13).

DECEMBER.

December 1.—The Resurrection of the Dead (1 Cor. 15:35-58).

December 2.—The Transfiguration of Paul (2 Cor. 12:1-10).

December 3.—The Fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:16-25).

December 4.—“That Ye May Be Able to Stand” (Eph. 6:10-20).

December 5.—The Meaning of Life and Death (Phil. 1:21-31).

December 6.—The Mind of a Christian (Phil. 4:4-13).

December 7.—The Method of Making the Christian Life and Characteristics of That Life (Col. 3:1-17).

A MANUAL FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

December 8.—“Concerning Them that Fall Asleep” (1 Thess. 4:13-18).

December 9.—“That Ye May Be Counted Worthy of the Kingdom of God” (2 Thess. 1:3-12).

December 10.—“Fight the Good Fight of Faith” (1 Tim. 6:11-20).

December 11.—A Life Worth Living (2 Tim. 4:1-8).

December 12.—The Life of Regeneration (Tit. 3:1-11).

December 13.—The Practice of Brotherhood (Philemon).

December 14.—The Deceitfulness of Sin (Heb. 3:12-19; 4:1-3).

December 15.—The Splendors of Faith (Heb. 11:32-40).

December 16.—The Greatness and Dignity of the Christian Life (Heb. 12:1-13).

December 17.—Pure Religion (Jas. 1:19-27).

December 18.—Religion and Life's Moods and Tenses (Jas. 5:13-20).

December 19.—The Example of Christ (1 Pet. 2:18-25).

December 20.—Make Your Calling and Election Sure (2 Pet. 1:2-11).

THE GOLDEN THREAD

December 21.—Walking in the Light (1 John 2:1-11).

December 22.—God's Love and the Great Hope (1 John 3:1-3; Ps. 17:15).

December 23.—The Test of Error and Truth (1 John 4:1-6).

December 24.—Friendship, Truth, Love, Constancy (2 John).

December 25.—A Friend's Prayer (3 John).

December 26.—Keeping in the Love of God (Jude vs. 17-25).

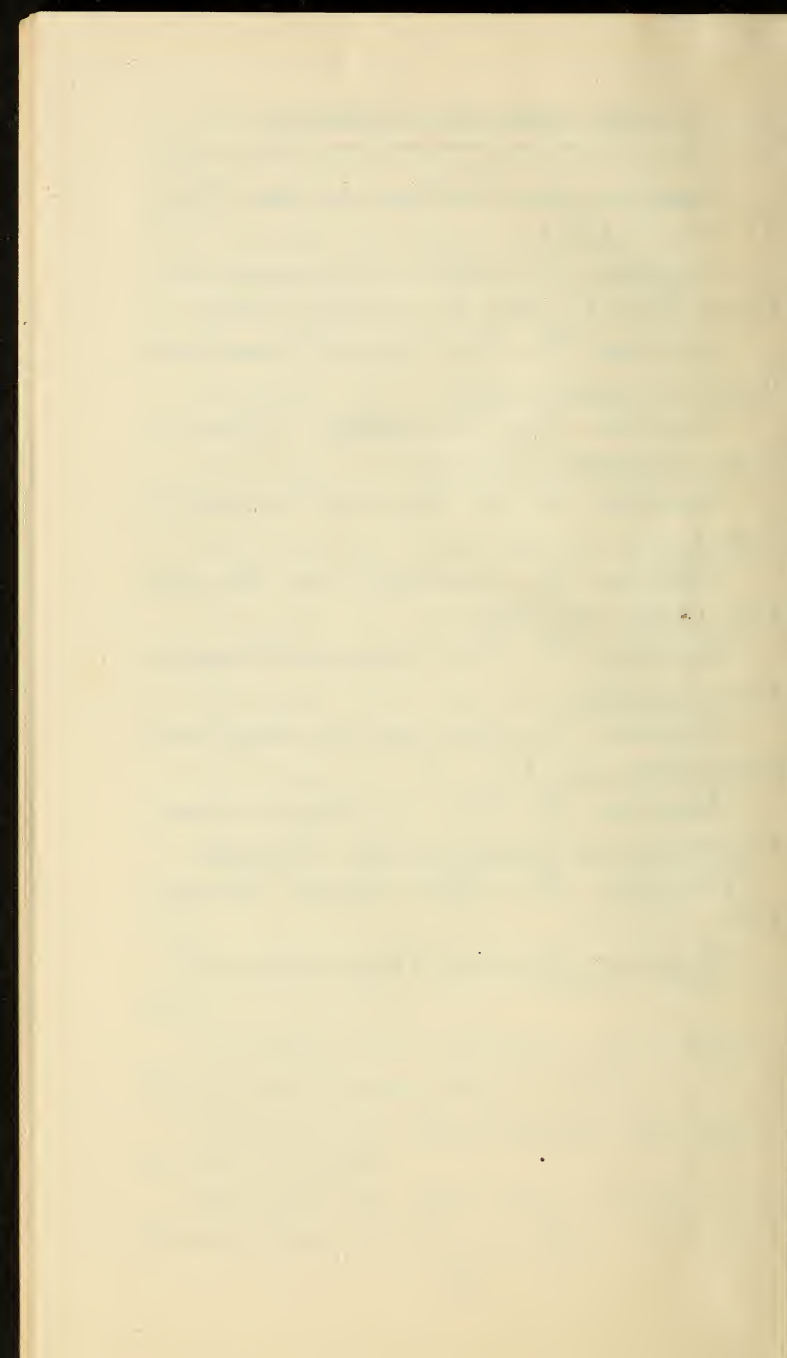
December 27.—The Christ of Eternity (Rev. 1:8-20).

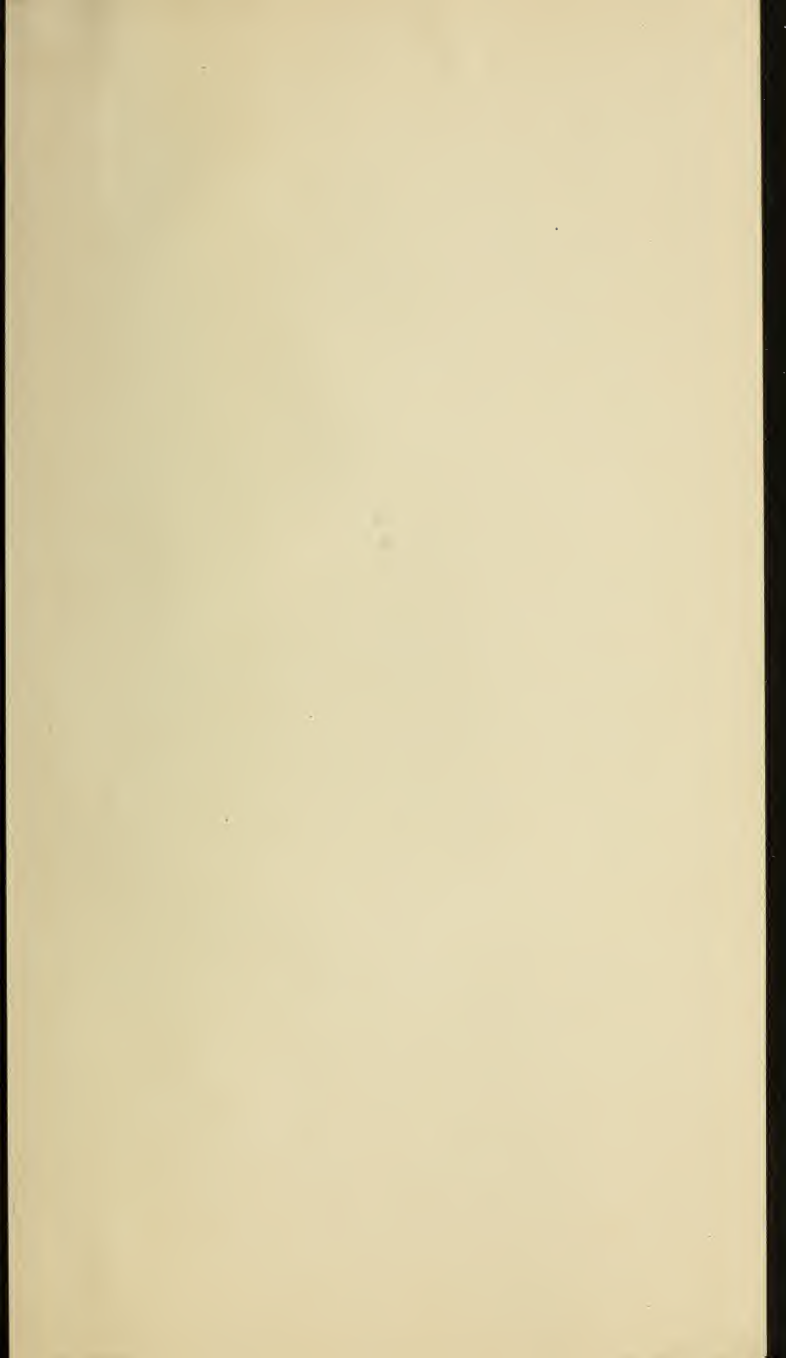
December 28.—Love the Way into Paradise (Rev. 2:1-7).

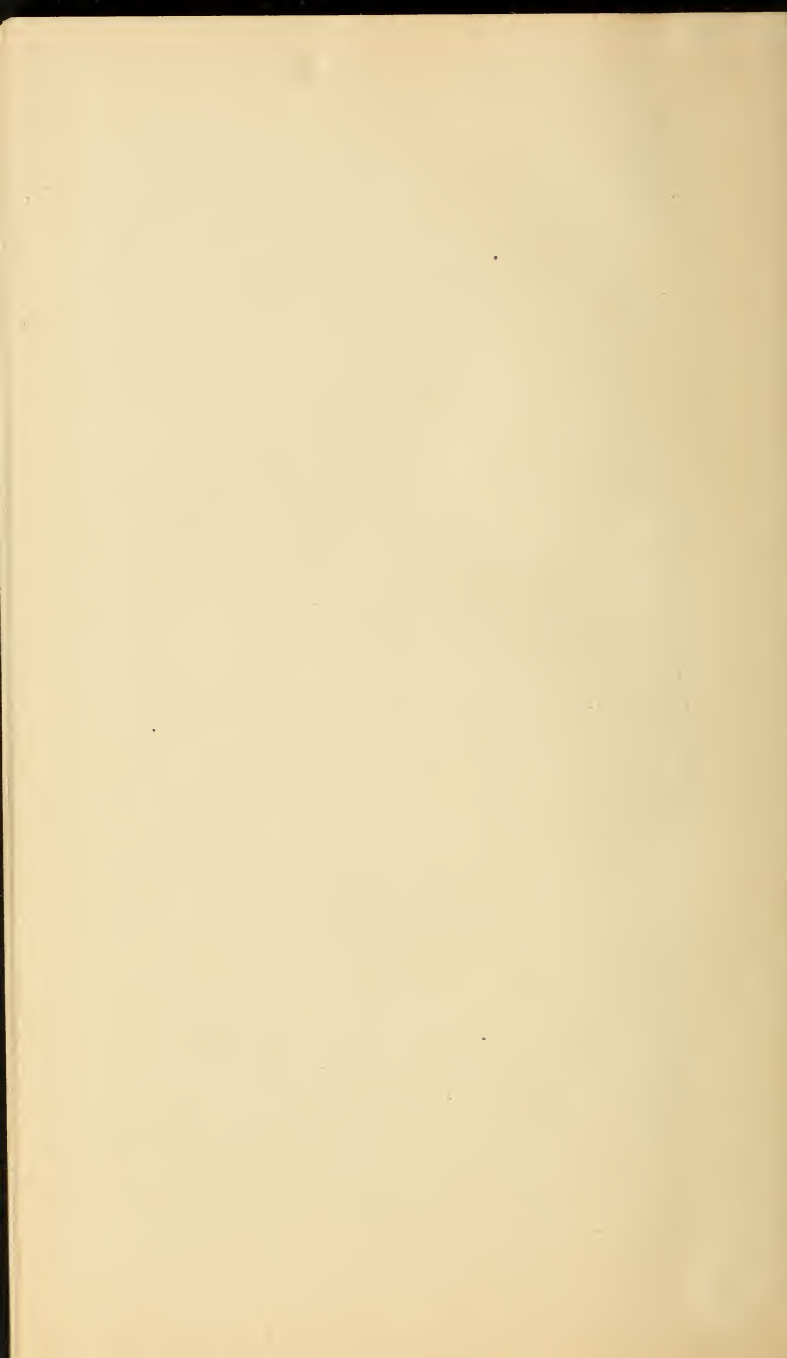
December 29.—How to Regain Lost Enthusiasm in Religion (Rev. 3:14-22).

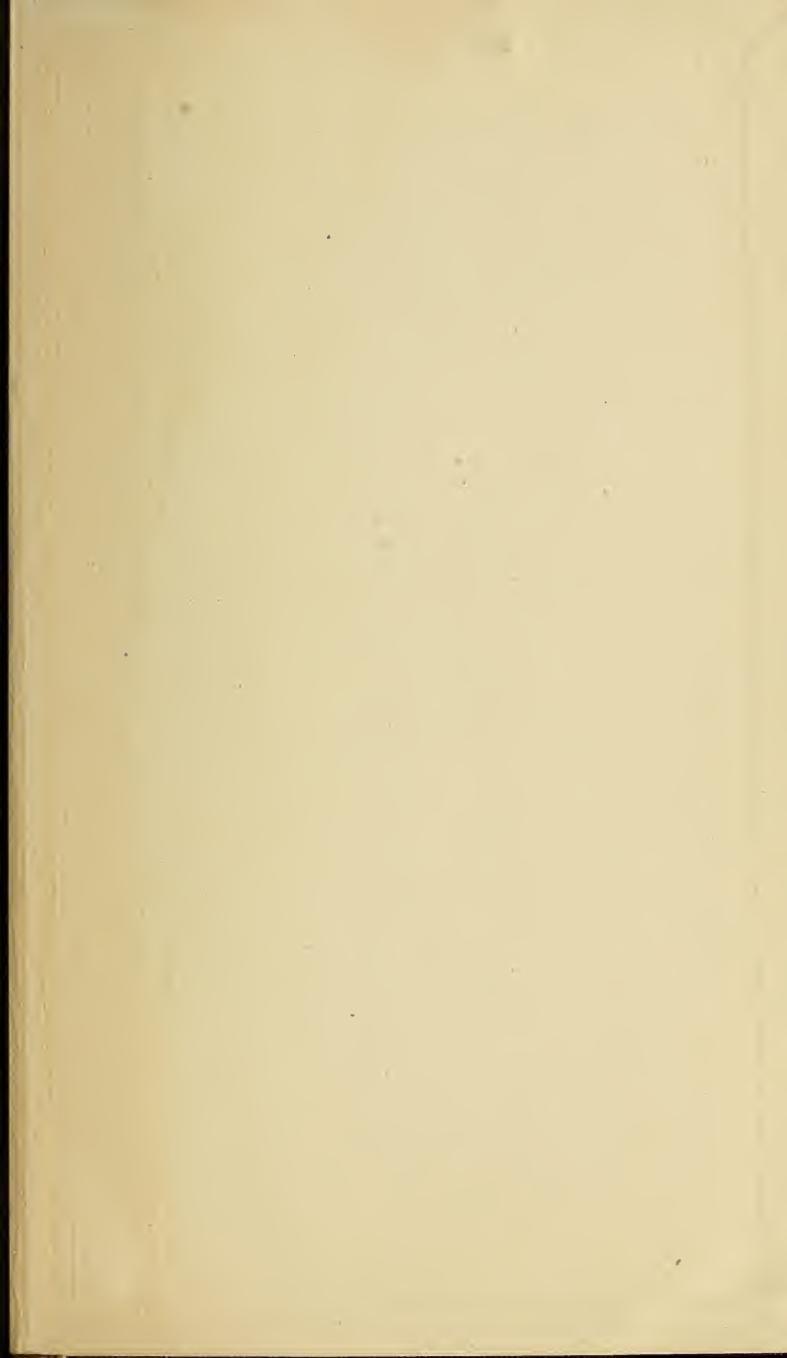
December 30.—The Great Victory (Rev. 7:9-17).

December 31.—Last Things (Rev. 22).









LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 015 958 474 4